

OF BARREN BOULDERS AND GLOWING GRANITE:
NATURAL METAPHORS IN DANIEL WEBSTER'S COMMEMORATIVE
ORATIONS

By

Amy Beth Leyerzapf

B.A., University of Kansas, 1998

Submitted to the Department of Communication Studies and the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Kansas
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Arts

Chairperson

Committee members

Date Defended: _____

The Thesis Committee for Amy Beth Leyerzapf certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

OF BARREN BOULDERS AND GLOWING GRANITE:
NATURAL METAPHORS IN DANIEL WEBSTER'S COMMEMORATIVE
ORATIONS

Committee:

Chairperson

Date
Approved: _____

ABSTRACT

New England struggled throughout the 1800's to maintain its place as the nation's anchor while competing forces of progress and uncertainty, slavery, and westward dispersal of the population threatened the country's unity. Leaders worried that national unity would dissolve as the memory of America's founding and struggle for nationhood faded. To contribute to the body of work examining Daniel Webster's epideictic rhetoric and gain a better understanding of his construction of a conservative, reassuring public memory of America's origins, this work explicates texts of the 1820 Plymouth and 1825 Bunker Hill Orations with an eye to his use of natural and light-dark archetypal metaphors. The natural place and light-dark metaphors resonated with the era's Presbyterian worldview, despite their ability to limit agency, allowing Webster to reaffirm the status quo and reestablish New England's place as the nation's moral and philosophical epicenter by substituting intellectual and affective effort for physical action.

DEDICATION

Since a Master's Program doesn't come with a Senior Night, a shout out here will have to do. Love ya, MayFay! Thanks for keeping me on track!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the point when I had finally become immersed in this project, I was advised to expect three significant challenges before I was done. However intriguing those challenges have been, I am left with an overwhelming appreciation for the numerous blessings I have encountered along the way. As in life, rather than count my challenges, I choose to count my blessings.

First, for my Thesis Committee: As my inspiringly bright and encouraging advisor Dr. Beth Manolescu (a.k.a. “Job”) has made this experience nothing but positive. I am equally grateful to my committee members, Dr. Robert Rowland and Dr. Scott Harris whose patience and insight have been boundless.

Second, for my Accountability Committee: With Scott, MaryBeth, Dr. Phil, Paul, Patsy, Justin, Leah, and Cori around I could never, ever, escape productivity . . . no matter how hard I tried! Without each of you and your constant support, although some with less experience and understanding might call it unrepentant harassment, it would have been so easy to quit, time and time again.

Third, for my Grounding Committee: If not for Shawna, I would have bought a tree house and moved in. Thank you for your part in keeping my head out of the tree and in the game!

And most importantly, for my Family: Mom, Dad, Steve, and Mr. Hoove, you have been with me and behind me from the moment I made the decision to jump back into graduate school, each in your own individual ways. ALL that you have done and all that you continue to do mean so much. I love you!

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	v
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
State of Scholarship.....	4
Webster's Ideology.....	7
Webster's Style.....	11
Webster in His Own Words.....	12
Objects of Study.....	15
Précis of Chapters.....	17
Chapter Two: Place, Memory, and Metaphor.....	19
Place and Public Memory.....	23
Archetypal Metaphor and Memory	27
Chapter Three: Barren Boulders: Plymouth Rock and People as Property.....	33
The Place of Plymouth Rock.....	37
Rock, People, Slavery.....	40
Conclusion.....	57
Chapter Four: Glowing Granite: Memorials, Monuments, and Memories.....	59
Memorializing Bunker Hill.....	61
Constructing Memories and Monuments.....	65
Conclusion.....	81
Chapter Five: Conclusion.....	83
Summary.....	85

Implications.....	88
Limitations and Extensions.....	90
Conclusion.....	94
Works Cited.....	95

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Few native sons of New England could attract such grandiose praise and at the same time vitriolic criticism as Daniel Webster (1782 – 1852). Whether known as “a natural Emperor of men,” the “Demosthenes of America,” a modern-day Pericles, Michael Angelo, or Dante, or more ominously “Black Dan” and a “sensualist, a libertine and a pauper supported by the contributions of his party,” Webster is almost universally recognized for his eloquence, legalistic mind, and Jacksonian statesmanship, regardless of personal impressions (Mills 1943; Bartlett 1972; Remini 1997). In addition to his well-known deliberative and judicial works, Webster produced and performed several ceremonial addresses that met with national and international acclaim in their day. Some received Presidential accolades for their detailed historical richness and were memorized and recited by school children in New England for decades as mini history lessons and models of ceremonial speechmaking (Mills 1943, 423; Browne 1993, 486-7; Remini 1997, 186). It was in fact ceremonial speechmaking where Webster first made a name for himself, traveling through New England as a young man giving Fourth of July addresses prior to making a name for himself speaking out against the War of 1812 and continuing his anti-imperialist rhetoric into the House of Representatives and the office of Secretary of State (Bartlett 1978, Seelye 1998; Smith 1999).

The interest in Webster’s epideictic works seems to have waned, with little attention given to his many ceremonial speeches in comparison to such endeavors as

the Webster-Hayne debates, the “Seventh of March” address, and *Dartmouth College* and *McCulloch v. Maryland* cases. It appears as though the once-celebrated remarks of an equally celebrated man have been relegated to the dusty archive of a bygone era despite being lauded as addresses that “ought to be read at the end of every century, and read at the end of every year, for ever and ever” (Peterson 1987, 107). The ceremonial address most often mentioned is his 1826 Eulogy of Presidents Adams and Jefferson, still referred to by some as the greatest “ghost” speech in American history (Browne 1997; Farrell 1997; Smith 2005). Those who do remark on Webster’s rhetoric tend to approach his addresses from historical and descriptive vantage points, providing little more than a re-telling of the tales Webster himself sought to bring to life through his own words (Lewis 1969; Matteson 2001, Remini 1997; Smith 1999; Cray 2001). At best, Webster’s remarks are categorized as little more than eloquent memorials (Seelye 1998) or recitations of public memory (Browne 1993, 1997; Farrell 1997), giving further justification for re-shelving the manuscripts and chalking up their contents to the purple prose of a man from another era with little bearing on today’s government or society.

A continued study of Daniel Webster’s epideictic works, however, will contribute to our understanding of the orator and his approach to commemoration as well as expand the existing body of work detailing 19th-century rhetoric. Detailed examination and explication of his strategies will perhaps reconstitute interest in his addresses among the rhetorical community and allow us a better understanding of the praise that met both the spoken and written versions of these utterances.

Additionally, Webster's ability to both capture and orchestrate public memory in these addresses provides insight into the American heart and mind (Seelye 1998, 79; Browne 1993, 475). At a time when much public action and reaction occurred surrounding public oratory, the ceremonial addresses are as important as those taking place in the congressional hall and courtroom. As Hariman has argued such an examination is valuable because the speech itself is "part of a larger process of public composition. By seeing the texts from inside, one gets a closer look at some of the conventions of the political culture itself. This relationship is reciprocal: the speech is a means of (re)constituting the culture, and does so in part by using widespread cultural designs as inventional strategies for securing assent on the issue of the movement" (1997, 164).

At the dawn of the "Era of Good Feeling," a time in American history fraught with local insecurity, regional conflict, and national growing pains, Webster's speeches give rhetoricians and historians alike a window into the anchoring points of public memory and public sentiment as the Founding Fathers faded and a new generation of American statesmen began to take power. Webster's oratory rings with remembrance for those values and ideals upon which the fledgling country and government were founded as well as respect for the struggles faced by American forefathers, in an attempt to reestablish New England as the historical locus of the American way of thinking and living. Through his words we are better able to assess what images and ideas resonated with the country in a time of great instability, political change, and geographical flux. To this day, the squat granite boulder called

“Plymouth Rock” and the Breed’s Hill farmland better known as “Bunker Hill” are vibrant tourist destinations, attracting well over half a million visitors every year. As a nation, our public memory of these places has in fact endured. The same cannot be said of the words spoken by those attempting to capture and preserve that memory.

I seek to remedy these academic slights, bringing the texts of two of Webster’s better-known epideictic addresses to light in the post-millennial era and reassessing their rhetorical value for modern scholars. In the following chapters, I will introduce Webster’s 1820 Plymouth and 1825 Bunker Hill orations with an eye to his use of the light-dark dichotomy and elements from his surroundings as the foundation upon which he builds the rest of his remarks. A close reading of the texts will seek to explain two of his strategies. First, how he privileges natural place metaphors and leverages the stark contrasts embodied in the light-dark family of archetypal metaphors to construct a conservative and reassuring public memory of America’s origins, situating New England at the moral and philosophical epicenter, and reaffirming the status quo. And second, how his reliance on such natural and archetypal metaphors work within the period’s conservative Calvinist worldview to substitute intellectual and affective “work” for more bold and direct action without making such a limited view of human agency seem unappealing.

State of Scholarship

The systematic, scholarly examination of Webster’s oratory is disappointingly sparse unlike the more general, popular writings on the man, his political career and

his opulent lifestyle (Bartlett 1978, 297). Of further disappointment is the fact that when mentioned, his predominantly epideictic remarks often play back up to the more substantive exploration of his primarily deliberative and forensic pieces. Admittedly complicating matters, as Smith (2005) is keen to argue, Webster's addresses often crossed genre, blending forensic and deliberative argument with epideictic remembrances to enhance both immediate persuasive appeal and historical staying power.

That said, however, within the past decade Smith (1999, 2005), Browne (1997) and Farrell (1997) are the only pieces by rhetorical scholars examining Webster's work. Further, Smith's essay is the only piece focused solely on Webster's rhetoric published in the discipline's major journals in that same time period. Other essays appearing within the past two decades that mention Webster's work do so within historical frameworks and in regional publications, largely as a way to make mention of one of New England's native sons (Nathans 1966; Parish 1967; Bartlett 1972; Erickson 1984; Matteson 2001; Cray 2001). Ironically, several of these authors echo Browne (1993, 464) in issuing calls for the continued, detailed study of Webster's work, noting the sparse examination by others in several fields. Yet there seems to be little response to the clarion call outside of approximately one article per decade.

Of the existing scholarship, two essays prove highly informative to this thesis. Smith's (1999) article highlights Webster's ability to artfully blend the deliberative, epideictic, and forensic genres in his legislative addresses while

examining the evolution of his public stance on U.S. expansionism during the mid 1800's. The author cites the start of Webster's anti-war rhetoric in his epideictic addresses, including the Plymouth address. He states: "... Webster gave a speech [at Plymouth] in which he linked slavery and imperialism arguing that the blight of slavery would prevent America from reaching her destiny." Such a strategy opens a door for the further study of both his ceremonial works (2) and his political rebound beginning with "the Completion of the Bunker Hill Monument Address" where he crafted his working definition of imperialism (3). Throughout the essay, the author examines four of Webster's addresses which he argues comprise a generically braided "campaign of persuasion" (14) all primarily deliberative with decidedly forensic overtones and epideictic flourishes. Smith suggests that Webster's anti-war rhetoric functioned mainly to further his own political career at a time when he was not enjoying the power and notoriety that he did at other moments in his lifetime.

Of further import to this thesis, Browne (1993) serves as a case study of the articulation of public memory in addition to a call for further scholarly inquiry into Webster's ceremonial work (464). Browne argues that, through strategically locating the pilgrim landing in a larger American meta-narrative, Webster is able to rhetorically construct and articulate a powerful and lasting vision of America's "errand into the wilderness" which would be read by generations to come (468). This piece provides a stepping-off point for this thesis by offering a textual analysis from the perspective of public memory scholarship. The author focuses primarily on Webster's ability to create a collective meaning for such ideas as progress,

achievement, property, and national expansion with an eye to “[a] sort of genius of the place,” arguing that the rock “becomes a Rock of Ages, at once the symbol of arrival and of hope . . . moreover the ground upon which the speaker can reflect on the origins and growth of the American errand (471).

However, Browne concerns himself with the idea of the rock as a snapshot, simply a character actor in a wider production “whereby the past starts as an object of commemoration and ends as a rationale for government by property” as opposed to a tangible metaphor for American progress from struggle to stronghold (475). Further, the work ignores the powerful social and cultural forces in play at the time of the address as well as the interplay between the rock and other natural metaphors Webster uses throughout the address. This thesis attempts to address both shortcomings.

Webster’s Ideology

The remaining scholarship concerning the rhetoric of Daniel Webster can be divided into two broad areas: those focused primarily on his ideology and those focused on stylistic issues. The bulk of published works fall into the first group. Within ideology three lines exist: works concerned with Webster’s philosophy on American expansionism, works concerned with his creation and articulation of an American civil religion, and somewhat related, works concerned with remembrance and memorializing. As a precursor to both Browne’s (1993) Smith’s (1999) essays, the earliest work examining Webster’s oratory also concerns itself with his views of

expansionism. Evolving from the author's wider study of New England attitudes towards the West and Western Expansion following the War of 1812, Parish (1967) paints Webster as decidedly pro-West throughout the 1820's, 30's, and 40's (530). While the piece offers an interesting snapshot of Webster's actions and advocacy in regard to Western expansion and internal improvement, it provides little commentary on Webster's words. Speechmaking is mentioned throughout, with reference to occasion or date as a way to inform the reader of where Webster was and what groups he was associating with. The work stops short of any rhetorical criticism.

Growing from early work examining Webster's articulation of his expansionism philosophy, scholarship from the second major category, civil religion, broadens the scope to encompass more than just the American growth westward. Emerging in 1972 and continuing into the present century, several authors address the uniquely American themes echoed in Webster's oratory (Bartlett 1972; Fields 1983; Erickson 1984; Smith 1987, 2005; Seelye 1998). Many address the generic concept of "Whig ideals" (Erickson 1984; Browne 1993, 1997; Remini 1997; Seelye 1998; Smith 2005) while others are more specific, mentioning progress and achievement (Erickson 1984; Browne 1993; Smith 2005), limited government (Smith 1999), internal improvement (Parish 1967; Browne 1993), and slavery (Smith 1999, 2005).

Where Bartlett (1972) and Smith (1987, 2005) offer a general overview of the man and his popularity with an eye to his roles as both a guardian and defender, Browne's (1993), Erickson's (1984) and Seelye's (1998) works argue more specifically that Webster relies upon the Pilgrims throughout his career to serve as

symbols of enterprise, fidelity, and virtue. Through a variety of works which Erickson labels “Pilgrim speeches” - including the 1820 Plymouth Rock oration, 1825 Bunker Hill and 1843 Completion of the Bunker Hill Monument orations, 1843 Landing at Plymouth speech, and “Pilgrim Festival at New York in 1850” address - Erickson notes that for Webster the first settlers serve as convenient illustrations of the noble attributes for an audience still intimately familiar with the characters. In addition to a thorough look at the Plymouth oration, Seelye echoes this sentiment, focusing on the evolution of Pilgrim language and imagery appearing in Webster’s later works including the Bunker Hill addresses, debate with Hayne, and New England Society oration, noting his consistent emphasis on progress (429).

A new line of scholarship emerged in the early 1980’s, concerning itself with Webster’s works that “strengthened the reputations of the dead and provided a senatorial model for the living” (Fields 1983, 26). Developing parallel to scholarship addressing civil religion, these new works focused more on remembrance and memorializing and continued to develop through the early part of the new century. Chapters by Farrell (1997) and Browne (1997) address Webster’s 1826 Eulogy to Adams and Jefferson through Burke’s notion of Master Tropes. Where Farrell advances the argument that the fictitious address Webster crafts and recites for Adams creates a master trope in the eulogy, Browne expands upon the argument, noting the importance of synecdoche in the Eulogy as Webster’s vehicle with which to “simultaneously concentrate and expand the Whig claim to an American birthright” and further entrench himself as “not only a spokesman of the Whig

tradition but its most talented ventriloquist” (44). Again, one is able to see the “braided genre” (Smith 1987, 419; 1999, 14) appearing as the ceremonial address takes on a more political tone.

Also addressing Webster’s use of memorializing while combining specific mention of place, Matteson (2001) pronounces Webster’s Bunker Hill address as “the best remembered speech ever delivered by an American at a scene of past military conflict” prior to Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address (422), and notes the emphasis Webster puts on the physical place. However, the idea of place as an important aspect takes a back seat to the argument that Webster uses a familial metaphor to illustrate the connection between those present and those being memorialized. While the work hints at an appreciation of Webster’s orchestration of public memory and a concrete mention of the importance of place in the oration, it offers little additional insight into the function of place-centered metaphors and their role in the creation of public memory due to the heavily individualistic literary emphasis. And Matteson concludes that “[t]he act of reading brings us together in commemoration because we all read the same words on the page, but this act also separates us and preserves our individuality because we all read with different aptitudes, expectations, and beliefs” (446). The work provides more perspective on Webster’s use of place in his orations, but it fails to address the potential strategic importance of place in creating an enduring public memory. This work seeks to bridge the gaps opened by Matteson’s analysis, examining and explaining the functions that both physical place and

metaphorical structure perform in not only the Bunker Hill but also the Plymouth addresses.

Webster's Style

The examination of Daniel Webster's rhetoric would be remiss if there was no mention of his oratorical prowess. The second group of scholarship focuses primarily on these stylistic traits. Although primarily positive, one work turns a decidedly critical eye to his approach. Black (1978) pronounces him as "the paradigm for the sentimental style" (77) and "an acutely sonorous representative of the type – one who knew how to keep his metaphors unmixed and who had a voice like a pipe organ" (78). However, Black seems more critical of the style than the rhetor, taking aim at others, including Abraham Lincoln and Oscar Wilde and noting that the style was a "necessarily transitory phenomenon . . . at the threshold of a sensibility" (84-85) that gave later readers a glimpse into the consciousness of an era. The works that followed (Bartlett 1978, Smith 1987, 2005) were far more positive and far more global in their assessments, reading more like oratorical bibliographies than rhetorical analyses.

Bartlett (1978) provides a concise historical background of Webster, supported by excerpts from the addresses themselves, Webster's personal correspondence with others, and period publications. Bartlett also remarks thoroughly upon Webster's manner of preparation for each address, again supported by the text of his personal papers. In a similar manner, Smith (1987) offers a brief

chronological glimpse at the rise of Webster as both lawyer and orator. Smith argues that Webster's early classical training and legal studies provided him with the intellectual foundation for his forensic, deliberative, and epideictic works alike by introducing him to the works of the philosopher kings while at the same time teaching him classical rhetorical technique with emphasis on invention and argumentation as well as stylistic devices. Although primarily focused on Webster's Supreme Court cases and later legislative remarks, the chapter does mention a few of his more notable epideictic works and clearly lays the foundation for Smith's later publications. While offering some enlightening background information, the work fails to address how Webster used this training and knowledge strategically when crafting his orations. This work begins where Smith leaves off, exploring and explaining the strategic importance of the specific place and nature-inspired metaphors Webster chose to achieve his goal of crafting enduring public memories given the political and socio-cultural environment of the day.

Webster In His Own Words

Perhaps the orator himself should win the award for most prolific publisher of his works, having produced multiple published editions of his life works and associated correspondence (1853a, 1853b). Additionally, he produced a virtual blizzard of pamphlet recreations of his orations (1800, 1801, 1802, 1806, 1812, 1817, 1821, 1825, 1828, 1832a, 1832b). Webster literary executor George Ticknor Curtis (1870) was responsible for two more volumes detailing the life and works of the New

England orator while more recently Charles Wiltse with Harold Moser (1976) and later with Alan Berolzheimer (1986) has added two volumes of Webster papers, including speeches and formal writings, while omitting the more copious private correspondence included in the Curtis compendia. Consumers of both Webster's and Curtis' publications should take note, however, that the published text of Webster's addresses will likely differ, sometimes substantially, from Webster's real-time utterances, as the orator was well known for further editing his work after oral delivery in order to give the speech a second life as a pamphlet.

Knowing they were often destined for publication and thus a source of additional income, Webster would critique his work after the fact, altering the final printed text to be more in line with his "ideal" oration. "Like Washington," writes Remini, Webster "took great care over what appeared in print over his name. And because he was such a fine, thoughtful, and painstaking writer, he altered the printed address so that its intellectual content would immediately seize the attention of the reader" (1997, 98). Some of Webster's edits were more substantial than others, depending largely upon the author's opinion of the outing. Webster was known as a perfectionist, as is best exemplified in the following correspondence with friend and executor Curtis regarding the already meticulously researched and painstakingly polished Bunker Hill oration. Of the work, he writes: "'I did the deed' this morning – i.e. that is I finished my [Bunker Hill] Speech - & I am pretty well persuaded it is a speech that will *finish* me – as far as reputation is concerned. There is no more tone

in it, than in the weather in which it has been written – it is ‘perpetual dissolution & thaw’ (Wiltse and Moser 1976, 55).

Always mindful of his image and perhaps hoping that his writings were further perfected for posterity, in a letter to Edward Everett, Webster once vowed: “I propose certainly to write over every thing which has not been revised by myself,” in reference to the preparation of his compiled works (F. Webster 1857 2: 413). Perhaps the practice worked as the sale and subsequent publication of “amplified” versions of both the Plymouth and Bunker Hill manuscripts were used as fundraisers for their respective associations. The Bunker Hill publication alone netted the memorial group an additional three hundred dollars (Wiltse and Moser 1976, 55) and excerpts of the Plymouth address appeared even later as memorization lessons in New England textbooks (Smith 2005, 63).

In lauding Washington, Daniel Webster quoted from Hebrews Chapter 11, saying, “He being dead, yet speaketh.” Just shy of two centuries after his own death, the same cannot be said of Webster himself. Should one look to the present state of rhetorical scholarship, it is immediately apparent that the discipline has largely overlooked perhaps one of its most eloquent spokesmen. This work seeks to remedy the slight, simultaneously reviving scholarly interest in the ceremonial works of a man both deeply revered and equally despised, answering the call of Browne, Smith, and others advocating the systematic examination of Webster’s masterful oratory and contributing further to the robust line of inquiry into 19th-century American oratory.

Objects of Study

The texts considered in this work will include two of Webster's more well known epideictic addresses, the December 22, 1820 Plymouth Oration and the June 17, 1825 Bunker Hill Oration. Both addresses are known by several other names that include "The First Settlement of New England," and "Laying the Cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument" respectively (Smith 2005). These particular orations were chosen for two reasons. First, they constitute the only major epideictic addresses commissioned by committees for the celebration of a specific place, both in time and geographical location. Additionally, they represent a distinct genre among his ceremonial works, addresses commissioned by a group charged with simultaneously preserving public memory of an important event in American history and celebrating the accomplishments of the people involved. Within a wider context, they represent a jumping-off point for the continued study of Webster's epideictic work which includes his eulogy to Adams and Jefferson, exposition on the character of Washington, a second Bunker Hill address, and remarks marking the start of construction for the beginning of the US Capitol building as well as the litany of Fourth of July orations dating back to his junior year at Dartmouth in 1800 (Bartlett 1978, 24).

Given the amount of variation between texts of Webster's orations, rhetorical scholars often consult the versions published in Wiltse and Berolzheimer's (1986) two-volume *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Speeches and Formal Writings* for rhetorical analysis, as those in the field believe that these versions most closely

approximate Webster's actual utterances and are accompanied by meticulous footnoting with thorough explanations of variations from text to text (Smith 1999, 4). Unfortunately Wiltse's works only provide a representative sample of Webster's deliberative, forensic, and epideictic oratory and privilege the deliberative and forensic. The two-volume compilation features only two epideictic works, Webster's 1826 eulogy to Adams and Jefferson in volume one (1800-1833) and Addition to the Capitol of 1851 in volume two (1834 – 1852), stating "we might with equal justification have selected the Plymouth Oration, either or both of the Bunker Hill Addresses, or the Character of Washington" (Wiltse and Berolzheimer 1986, xii).

As the addresses in question are not included in Wiltse and Berolzheimer's 1986 work, for the purpose of this study the texts will be drawn from Webster's own *The Works of Daniel Webster*, Volume 1 (1853b). Though published posthumously, the work began shortly before Webster's death by friend and associate Edward Everett who had worked closely with Webster on previous bound collections of his letters, orations, and other papers. Everett's exacting bibliographic essay begins the work, detailing prior printings and noting additions and deletions. Neither text in question was added or removed in the posthumous edition. I have chosen to extract the texts from this compilation for that reason as well as that they serve as the basis for Wiltse's later editions, through multiple domestic and international printings and one change in editorial staff (Wiltse and Berolzheimer 1986, xv).

For the sake of comparison, two additional sets of texts, taken from an 1853 work, *Life, Eulogy, and Great Orations*, also published posthumously under

Webster's name, and *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster* (1903), another highly regarded source of speech texts among Webster scholars (Bartlett 1978; Smith 2005), were compared with the texts from the 1853 publication and appear identical. It is my belief that the remarks, although admittedly not flawlessly reflective of the exact words Daniel Webster uttered on December 22, 1820 or June 17, 1825, do represent Webster's sentiments and are unaltered by non-affiliated middlemen.

Précis of Chapters

Chapter 2, "Place, Memory, and Metaphor," applies the scholarship of place, public memory, and archetypal metaphor in public address to ceremonial oratory. This thesis builds on the work of Osborn (1967) by addressing possible strategic uses and potential pitfalls of light-dark contrasts and the sense of inevitability and determinism fostered by the light cycle and its associated images in crafting enduring public memory.

Chapter 3, "Barren Boulders: Plymouth Rock and People as Property," explicates Webster's use of natural place metaphors, embodied in Plymouth Rock, as well as his ability to leverage the stark contrasts inherent in the light-dark family of archetypal metaphors to celebrate the work of the Pilgrims, condemn slavery, and encourage those present to continue their ancestors' work in thought and feeling. By using the period's conservative "old school" Presbyterian worldview, stressing "providential progress" and calling upon individuals to work "from within . . . gradually and silently" (Bozeman 1977, 712), Webster substitutes feeling and

thinking for more bold and direct action without making such a limited view of human agency unappealing or heavy-handed. In encouraging the audience to think and feel as the First Settlers did, he argues that doing so will continue Plymouth on its path to the nations' moral center.

In similar fashion, Chapter 4, "Glowing Granite: Memorials, Monuments and Memories" will further expand upon Webster's ability to further construct a conservative and comforting public memory that preserved the status quo through his use of natural and light-dark metaphors in his 1825 Bunker Hill address. To reestablish Boston's place as the nation's moral beacon, he strategically contrasts the bright, natural, and divinely sanctioned American experiment with a dark and militaristic Europe while recounting the illustrious and inevitable American coming of age from the earliest days of Columbus' discovery through its Revolutionary victory.

Finally, chapter 5 will summarize and discuss potential places for extension along with identifying the strengths and limitations of the work at hand.

CHAPTER TWO

Place, Memory, and Metaphor

I have never felt more down sick on all subjects connected with the public, than at the present moment. I have heretofore cherished a faint hope that New England would some time or other get out of this miserable, dirty squabble of local politics, and assert her proper character and consequence. But I at length give up. I feel the hand of fate upon us, and to struggle is in vain. We are doomed to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. There is a federal interest, a Democratic interest, a Bankrupt interest, an Orthodox interest, and a Middling interest, but I see no national interest, nor any national feeling in the whole matter. I am, dear Sir, your true but despairing friend,

--Daniel Webster to Justice Story
May 12, 1823

By 1823 Daniel Webster, now an overseer of Harvard University (Smith 2005, 65), had seen success in the Supreme Court, arguing successfully in the cases of *Dartmouth College*, *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *Gibbons v. Ogden*, was highly regarded as one of the nation's most eloquent orators, and was serving a second term as a United States Representative, this time in the Eighteenth Congress (Lewis 1969, 89). However, the nation he felt so strongly about serving had changed radically since his first term in office ten years earlier (Remini 1997, 16). It seemed that from the very dawn of the nineteenth century, New England found itself struggling to maintain its status as the nation's geographical, philosophical and moral anchor. And New England's people were drifting too.

Fallout from the War of 1812 brought sectarian divisions to a new prominence when murmurs of Northern secession surfaced (Bartlett 1972, 63). The Louisiana

Purchase, westward expansion, and the Missouri Compromise had further diluted New England's political dominance and permitted the population to move farther away from its historical roots (Remini 1997, 60). And the question of slavery threatened an even greater, philosophical separation (Purcell 2002, 210).

As the Founding Fathers and Revolutionary great died off, they were replaced by a new generation, excited by progress and reveling in the growing affluence of the rising middle class. A newly affluent group of Americans would begin to exert political power as the old political unions dissolved and new, more stratified, parties and partnerships emerged (Seelye 1998, 141-42). This social, political, and commercial momentum, coupled with the geographic dispersal of the population, and advanced by the steamboat, widespread publication of newspapers, and reliable mail delivery threatened the country's historic unity (Purcell 2002, 176; Seelye 1998, 78). Public leaders, including Daniel Webster, worried that national cohesiveness would begin to dissolve as the memory of America's founding and subsequent struggle for nationhood faded (Purcell 2002, 173; Remini 1997, 142).

In response to this growing sense of national insecurity, the heightened public emotionalism spurred by the Second Great Awakening and Era of Good Feeling virtually exploded. Within the traditional conservative Calvinist notion of "providential progress" (Bozeman 1977, 711) and its associated idea that "[a]ll real improvement must begin from within" (Bozeman 1977, 712), large-scale religious revivals "stressing free will, inner piety, and an outwardly moral life" became commonplace in communities large and small (Smith 2005, 55). The traditionally

intellectual sermons of First Great Awakening preachers, “old lights” such as Cotton Mather transformed to include more personalized, emotional appeals to conversion and redemption through Christ as first seen in the sermons of the “new lights” including Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield (Smith 2005, 55) and continued in the works of those such as Lyman Beecher. Encouraged by the traditional Presbyterian idea of the power of individuals to be the “gradual leaven of good which silently leavens the whole lump” (Bozeman 1977, 712) the movement spawned a growing sense of individualism and placed even more emphasis upon the power of personal choice. This personal empowerment coupled with emergent socio-economic classes would eventually give birth to the abolitionist movement, but in the short run encouraged calls for widened democracy and expanded suffrage.

However the movement didn’t confine its political activities to the commonplaces of widened democracy and suffrage alone. Where the Era of Good Feeling would seek to preserve the country’s history through remembrances, the Second Great Awakening would try to canonize it. Suddenly, the Declaration of Independence and Constitution took on an almost divine status. Community religious leaders seized on Winthrop’s Puritanical vision of the shining city, declaring America as a chosen country with a moral imperative to bring order to the world and its founding articles as “holy documents” inspired by God (Smith 2005, 55). Widely covered by popular media sources of the time, such as the *New-York Evangelist* and *Lectures on Revivals*, these attempts to sanctify the country’s founding and its

seminal documents spread throughout the 24 states quickly and convincingly (Smith 2005, 55).

The fevered religious revivals were not the only activities taking on a new cultural importance across the struggling nation. Commemorative events, although “usual and frequent with Americans” (Purcell 2002, 39), took on an even greater cultural importance for those concerned with the health of the Union, as exemplified in a June 1824 essay from the *Vermont Gazette*, titled “Commemorative Festivals.” Author Charles Doolittle recognized the Revolutionary War’s power to keep the nation together despite sweeping change, stating: “National festal occasions, in their observance, link together successive generations of men, and enforce with captivating energy the wisdom and necessity of preserving moral examples set for us in the purest ages of the Republic” (Purcell 2002, 175). Doolittle’s idea, however, was certainly not novel. As early as 1812, Webster himself was calling for increased contemplation of the passing generation and all that it stood for. In his Fourth of July oration delivered in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, he declared, “It is in the power of every generation to make themselves, in some degree, partakers in the deeds, and in the fame of their ancestors, by adopting their principles, and studying their examples. Wherever history records the acts of men, the past has more or less influence on the present. We come to take counsel of the dead. From the tumults and passions that agitate the living world, we withdraw to the tomb, to listen to the dictates of departed wisdom” (Remini 1997, 98).

Place and Public Memory

Doolittle's and Webster's advocating of public remembrances as powerfully unifying forces hints at their understanding of what public memory scholar Bradford Vivian (2004) calls the "fundamental relationship among place, historical memory, and the maintenance of community." Vivian goes on to assert that cultural renewal occurs through the repetition of those rituals, which preserve the "unity of memory, place, and community" (191-92). From the beginning of time, men realized the powerful importance of remembrance, the ancient "custom handed down from our ancestors for each to defend the memorials of his forebears" spoken of by Cicero and his contemporaries (Vasaly 1993, 118).

According to Browne (1993), public memory can best be understood in terms of both its rhetorical and ritualistic elements: "[t]he rituals of public memory are omnipresent. Historically they include the rites of commemoration by which governments ballast authority against waves of revolt, local celebrations of local heroes, and those countless monuments created by the architects of memory to shapen our sense of a shared past. These performances take on a powerfully rhetorical aspect because they help negotiate conditions of community and provide symbols of identity and difference" (464). Thelan (1989) expands the notion of a rhetorically constructed memory, noting that "[p]eople depend on others to help them decide what experiences to forget and which to remember and what interpretation to place on an

experience. People develop a shared identity by identifying, exploring, and agreeing on memories” (1122).

Therefore, it is not at all surprising that when faced with a precipitous decline in notoriety, those in New England would turn to their unique, albeit shallow, pool of national history to provide an avenue for the politically embattled and socially insecure region to capitalize on its founding legacy. If New England seized the opportunity to parade some of its well-known sites, including Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill, across the national stage at a time when other national artifacts were reaching canonical status, it might be possible for the region to rally its citizens and reassert its historical importance to the rest of the nation even if it no longer dominated politically. And, in the midst of the Era of Good Feeling, with two of New England’s significant anniversaries only five years apart, the two hundredth anniversary of the Plymouth landing and the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill became convenient regional rallying points. Of course the committees charged with the Plymouth and Bunker Hill celebrations would seek out a powerful orator to recount the events that occurred for the gathered crowd; however, the tradition of public memory was far more complex than a simple recounting of familial stories.

The ritual and rhetoric of public memory do not occur randomly. Certain elements must be present for the event to take place. Philosopher Edward S. Casey (2004) delineates the five necessary conditions in his work “Public Memory in Place and Time”: public place, public presence, public discussion, common topic, and

commemoration of place. “In contrast to other primary kinds of remembering,” he writes, “public memory occurs only when people meet and interact in a single scene of interaction” (Casey 2004, 32). Therefore, *place* is crucial to the eliciting of public memory not only as a location for those remembering to gather but also, if possible, as an actual embodiment of that which is being remembered. Webster himself acknowledged this phenomenon of “active material inducement by the place – its power of drawing out the appropriate memories in that location” (Casey 2004, 32) in the Plymouth Oration when he spoke of the “*genus of the place*” (Webster 1853b, 7) embodied in the rock and again in the Bunker Hill address when he noted that the crowd had gathered “in this spacious temple of the firmament . . . among the sepulchers of our fathers” (Webster 1853b, 59).

His remarks acknowledging the location also hint at Casey’s second necessary condition, that of *public presence*. While place provides a tangible link to the memory being evoked, it also “offers a space in which human bodies can come into proximity . . . for the sake of a public presence that can be accomplished only when people congregate for a common purpose” (Casey 2004, 33). Not unlike the popular religious revivals of the time, the commemorative rituals drew enormous crowds of people under the auspice of celebration. In the case of Plymouth, firsthand accounts put the crowd in the First Parish church at nearly 1,500 (Browne 1993, 467-469) with several hundred thousand more reading the published version in the following years. And five years later at Breed’s Farm, an audience of nearly twenty thousand, if not more, gathered according to those present (Remini 1997, 248).

Although attendance likely ballooned upon word that the great Daniel Webster would headline the events, the idea of a group coming together in a particular place for the express purpose of discourse is key to Casey's third element of public memory, that of *public discussion*. He is quick to note that the discourse need not be formally organized or necessarily constitute one particular genre; its power exists in its mere ability to be heard. "The role of language in this situation," he writes, "is to articulate what might have remained sequestered and undiscussed, held in private thought or emotion" (Casey 2004, 34). Although the discourse can take on a myriad of forms, it must revolve around a *common topic*, Casey's fourth constituent element of public memory. Such topic is important, he argues, because of its ability to unite the participants, its ability to bring together a diverse group in a single place whether or not those present fully agree on its status or implications (Casey 2004, 35).

In the case of New England in the 1820's, the public discussion occurring at both the Plymouth and Bunker Hill anniversary celebrations was highly formalized and ceremonial, allowing the organizers to give voice and form to the important and powerful effects both events had on the formation of the young nation. While "the relationship between public memory and ceremonial speech has [historically] been intimate" (Browne 1993, 465) in these two cases, the relationship was also strategic. Webster and the other organizers keenly felt the national movement away from the region and its accompanying values and symbols. By once again assembling Americans at these venerated sites and retelling the events within the framework of

the larger country, recounting the forefathers' struggles and triumphs, perhaps they could rekindle the reverence for New England once widely taken for granted. It is this powerful force of "remembering together" that comprises the final necessary element of Casey's view of public memory and that the events' organizers were counting on. *Commemoration in place* occurs beyond the juncture of the place, the people, and their discourse; "like public memory itself, it points both backward – to the vanished event or person – and forward (by means of the resolute wish to preserve the memory of the event or person, or even to act on it)" (Casey 2004, 35).

Reforming a strong connection with those present to those of the past could assist New England in reasserting its place in Americans' hearts and minds and in reuniting the federal, Democratic, Bankrupt, Orthodox, and Middling interests Webster bemoaned under a national interest once again. But the ritual gatherings of great crowds to hear a great oration might not be sufficient. For sometimes, it is not simply what is said, but also how it is said, that carries the lasting impact.

Archetypal Metaphor and Memory

In a series of articles concerning the power of archetypal metaphors in public address, Osborn states "in moments of great crisis, when society is in upheaval and fashionable contemporary forms of symbolic cultural identity are swept away, the speaker must turn to the bedrock of symbolism, the archetype, which represents the unchanging essence of human identity" (Osborn 1967, 119-20). At a time of fractured individualistic interests, vast geographical, political, and socio-economic

change, and regional tension, the symbol of New England as America's cradle no longer seemed sufficient to reunite the populace. Perhaps Daniel Webster would need to find a new, more universal image around which to reassert New England's rightful place.

The six characteristics of the archetypal metaphor would make it an attractive choice for a rhetor in Webster's situation. Osborn enumerates these characterizing features in his 1967 article "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family." First, they are "especially popular in rhetorical discourse" while second, their popularity appears to be stable across both time and culture (116). In selecting such images, Webster could be relatively assured that his extant audience, as well as those who would later read his orations in pamphlet form, would identify equally with the imagery he proffered. The archetypal metaphors' third feature, their grounding "in prominent features of experience, in objects, actions, or conditions which are inescapably salient in human consciousness" and fourth feature, their "attachment to basic, commonly shared motives" (116) would further ensure the images' continued value beyond the moment of his addresses, providing an enduring impression of New England as a national anchor point.

However, the archetypal metaphor's power was not limited to its salience. As their fifth characteristic, Osborn notes a sort of "double association" that occurs when the rhetor's subject is related to the archetype. The archetypal metaphor is uniquely able to simplify decidedly complex human interests, energies, and motivations by expressing them symbolically. Webster could select from a myriad of easily

understood concepts such as disease and remedy, light and dark, or high and low to express far more complicated ideas such as right and wrong, power, slavery, and God's will. It is perhaps this near universal salience and rendering power that leads speakers, including Webster, to use archetypal metaphors at important points in the speech. This placement comprises their sixth characterizing feature. "One can expect to find such images developed at the most critical junctures in a speech: establishing a mood and a perspective in the introduction, reinforcing a critical argument in the body, and synthesizing the meaning and force of a speech at its conclusion" Osborne writes. "And because of their persuasive power, their potential for cross-cultural communication, and their time-proofing, one can expect the perceptive rhetorician to choose them when he wishes to effect crucial change in societal attitude, speak to audiences beyond his own people, or to be remembered for a speech beyond his lifetime" (Osborn 1967, 116-7).

Had he been present, and Webster not yet convinced, Osborn would have likely offered him the following, final, suggestion: "[a]udiences also are unusually susceptible in such moments [of societal crisis] to archetypal images, for it is comforting to return with a speaker to the ancient archetypal verities, to the cycle of light and darkness, to the cycle of life and death and birth again, to the mountains and rivers and seas, and find them all unchanged, all still appealing symbolically to the human heart" (Osborn 1967, 120). And return to the ancient images Webster did. In his attempts unite fractured interests and lift his beloved New England above the "miserable, dirty squabble of local politics, and assert her proper character and

consequence” (Lewis 1969, 89), Webster utilizes the archetypal light-dark family, a group of metaphors “with strong positive and negative associations with survival and development motives” capable of expressing “intense value judgments” and eliciting “significant value responses from an audience” (Osborn 1967, 117).

The strong oratorical power of light-dark metaphors is rooted in their ability to accomplish three key things, effects that parallel Webster’s own motives in the addresses. First, light dark archetypal metaphors are able to “indicate and perpetuate the simplistic two-valued, black-white attitudes which rhetoricians and their audiences so often seem to prefer” (Osborn 1967, 117). Suddenly, issues of slavery, warfare, right, wrong, and religion can be neatly distilled within the confines of a ceremonial oration. Second, they are strategically important when a rhetor wishes to “express an attitude of inevitability or determinism about the state of present affairs or the shape of the future” (Osborn 1967, 117-18). What better way to return New England to its former state prominence than to assert that it was always meant to be a national anchor? Finally the light-dark family’s power rests in combination of stark delineation along with its ability to assert inevitability. This pairing forms a sort of “argument by archetype,” allowing the rhetor to make the claim that “material conditions follow from moral causes” (Osborn 1967, 119). To reestablish New England as the national philosophical and moral epicenter at the time of the Second Great Awakening, all Webster had to do was argue that its founding moments, specifically the Pilgrim landing and the start of the Revolution, were the exact moral

causes that had been necessary to catapult the young nation to its present, affluent and ever-expanding state.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to explain two things. First, it explains how Webster's use of the natural and archetypal light-dark metaphor facilitates his construction of public memory by following the typical light-dark argument by archetype that "material conditions stem from moral causes." Throughout both addresses, his argument echoes the pervasive Presbyterian notion of providential progress, asserting that if Americans want a bright and prosperous future, they must to continue the positive work begun by their ancestors. And although the sense of inevitability encouraged by the particular form of metaphor might reduce the audiences' motivation to enact change, Webster is able to counteract any apathy by again relying on providential progress. "Immediatism – in any form – was not the answer" (Bozeman 1977, 712) according to the popular tradition. Rather, the natural and divine solution was for man to "gradually and silently nudge their society in a juster direction" (Bozeman 1977, 712) and Webster would argue that they can do just that by choosing the "right" way of thinking and acting, substituting intellectual and affective effort for more direct physical work.

Second this thesis explains how Webster's use of the natural and light-dark family of metaphors helps him construct a public memory which simultaneously reaffirms the status quo and reasserts New England's claim to its place as America's national foundation. By casting the nation's present successful "material condition" as a direct result of the "moral causes" set in place in Plymouth and Boston by the

Pilgrims and Revolutionary soldiers respectively he works successfully within the conservative Calvinist tradition to do just that, lifting his cherished New England from its “miserable, dirty squabble” and asserting “her proper character and consequence” once again (Lewis 1969, 89).

CHAPTER THREE

Barren Boulders Plymouth Rock and People as Property

As early as 1769, New Englanders gathered annually to pay tribute to the Pilgrim arrival (Willison 1953, 115; Seelye 1998, 3; Browne 1993, 467). Although early events were largely local in flavor, by the dawn of the nineteenth century the occasion drew more “national” attention. Such was the case with the 1820 event. New England and to a greater extent America itself had survived involvement in two wars, a constitutional crisis, and the financial panic of 1819 by the time Webster addressed the crowd of almost 1,500 at Plymouth’s First Parish church (Browne 1993, 467-469). If the new nation needed to once again drop anchor to stabilize its ship of state, perhaps the nondescript granite boulder known as Plymouth Rock would provide just the historical and ideological weight needed.

Two centuries after the first settlers landed, the young nation appeared to be at a tipping point. The early 1800’s brought revolutions of all types, industrial, transportation, market, and democratic (Purcell 2002, 135; Remini 1997, 172). And although America had survived the war for its independence and seemed to ride a new tide of progress, internal tensions spurred by those changes threatened to pull the country apart. Geographically, the Louisiana Purchase had expanded the country’s borders westward yet again, giving the population room to spread out while also pulling it farther from the founding region. The Missouri Compromise and its 2/3 accounting methods, as well as universal suffrage for white males in the newly

accepted states, further diluted New England's political power and hinted at the strong sectionalist sentiments brewing in all regions. Economically, mistakes made by the National Bank, as well as questions of its constitutionality fostered hostility and insecurity among the populace (Remini 1997, 164). As financial panic and depression descended and news of new, higher tariffs emerged, many questioned the fledgling national government's ability to regulate the ever-growing country and its diversifying populations and needs.

The growing pains were not limited to the new regions, however. New England, the nation's cradle, was embroiled in heated debates within the federal government as well as at the state level. Nationally, President Monroe sought to unite Federalists and Republicans through "amalgamation," appointing representatives of both parties to his cabinet in an attempt to bring about a true unified "Era of Good Feelings" (Remini 1997, 170). However, as the election of 1820 approached, the weakening Federalist Party could not even offer up a presidential candidate for consideration. And in the Massachusetts Congress, issues of a broadened franchise, state-funded church, property ownership and oath qualifications for state senators, legislative apportionment, and judiciary independence, among other reforms hinted at the region's response to the tide of democratization sweeping the West.

Against this backdrop of competing progress and uncertainty, Daniel Webster's political star was rising. After his successful Supreme Court arguments in the case of *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *Dartmouth College*, as well as an anti-tariff address in Faneuil Hall, he found himself serving as one of Massachusetts's

presidential electors in the election of 1820 (Lewis 1969; Remini 1997, 171). With the robust support of Boston elite, including bankers and merchants, for his conservative, nationalistic philosophy, it came as no surprise when he was appointed as a delegate to the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention. During the convention, he furthered his own stock, serving as chair of several important committees and brokering compromises between other key delegates, all at the age of thirty-eight (Bartlett 1972, 81; Lewis 1969, 78; Remini 1997, 173).

At the request of the newly formed Plymouth Society, Daniel Webster took a break from the Constitutional Convention on December 22, 1820 to deliver the address that would later be lauded by President John Adams as an oration which “ought to be read at the end of every Century, and indeed at the end of every year for ever and ever” (Remini 1997, 186). Known widely at that time for his work before the Supreme Court as well as his Fourth of July and Phi Beta Kappa addressees, Webster’s reputation preceded him. Although the address would temporarily divert his attention from the convention, he understood both the strategic importance of the event and its reach. Such a speech would extend far beyond its immediate audience and would provide a convenient platform for his conservative, nationalistic philosophy (Remini 1997, 178). And in reality, his mind never completely left the convention as several of its hot-button issues framed his address (Seelye 1998, 79).

The speech he crafted, considered the first of his major epideictic orations, celebrated the Pilgrim landing, traced the origins of American religious and civic virtue through two centuries of progress, and ultimately claimed Plymouth as the

philosophical center of the nation, bringing the importance of New England back into the minds of the American people. “Historically,” Browne writes, “the relationship between public memory and ceremonial speech has been intimate. However diffuse their particular style or semantic content, such discursive forms collectively enact vested visions of time present, past, and future” (1993, 465). Further, writes Smith, “the speakers of Webster’s day used celebratory rhetoric to shape current values. These values became guides to decision-making for the nation’s leaders” (2005, 10).

In Webster’s case, this meant establishing a view of the Pilgrims as apostles seeking refuge in a land, embodied by “the Rock” and ripe with the potential of His blessings. Webster would not stop there, however. He relies on the strong archetypal associations embodied in the light-dark contrast and their corresponding positive and negative connotations to make his point. The simple difference between light and dark allows him to contrast the old (oppression, slavery, and stagnation) with the new (democracy, freedom, and progress) for his audience. But the power of the metaphor does not end with a simple stark contrast. As noted by Osborne (1967) “[t]here are occasions when speakers find it expedient to express an attitude of *inevitability* or *determinism* about the state of present affairs or the shape of the future” (117-18). And the First Settlement address was just such an occasion. Complimenting the time period’s conservative Presbyterian sense of “providential progress” (Bozeman 1977, 711) and its limited sense of agency, the light-dark contrast Webster utilizes allows him to further demonstrate that the present “*material conditions follow from moral causes*” (Osborne 1967, 119). Specifically, he uses the contrast to argue that the

socio-political system introduced non-violently by the Pilgrims and based in personal ownership of property formed the foundation of American representative government; and that a continuation down the darkened path of slavery would likely bring the bright days of freedom to an end. Therefore, by continuing to think in the high moral tradition and support the orderly, peaceable, democratic institutions created by their Pilgrim ancestors, the audience would do their part to prevent society's plunge into a Godless and terrifying darkness while the providential will unfolded.

After establishing the land as a sacred realm and its free holding as the foundation of American government, he could strategically contrast that foundational view with the modern state of affairs: regional tensions stemming from a nation stretching its boundaries and wrestling with the moral and political questions surrounding the African slave trade. While the crowd gathered that day to celebrate “the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion” (Webster 1853b, 22) he could also decry the “midnight labor in this work [the African slave trade] of hell, foul and dark” (Webster 1853b, 46).

The Place of Plymouth Rock

Prior to Webster's 1820 address, the boulder known as “Plymouth Rock” did not enjoy widespread notoriety. A survey of the Pilgrims' journals and subsequent written histories reveals no mention of the squat granite form, which would have more likely been viewed as a navigational hazard than a providential pier at the time

of their winter landing (Seelye 1998, 7). The rock begins to figure prominently in Pilgrim lore in 1769 when on December 22nd, the Old Colony Club gathered for a banquet, accompanied by oration and remembrance dedicated to “the memory of our brave and pious ancestors” (Seelye 1998, 27).

These annual celebrations continued through 1780 with varying degrees of pageantry often featuring a prominent orator, prayers, hymns, and a meal based loosely upon that which the Pilgrims may have taken upon their landing. However, the rock as an artifact did not take a central role in the addresses until its mention in Reverend Sylvanus Conant’s 1776 sermon. In an interpretation of Deuteronomy 32:11, he decreed “God . . . took them on the wings of his providence and wafted them over here. He set their feet upon a rock, and established them so firmly that one of the powers or machinations formed against them have been able to pluck them up; but the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew” (Seelye 1998, 32). Following Conant’s 1776 mention and a break in published Forefather’s Day sermons, the rock would be regularly mentioned after ceremonies picked back up in 1798 (Seelye 1998, 33; Browne 1993, 468).

Webster’s 1820 appearance, at the invitation of the newly formed Plymouth Society, was largely a product of his Congressional record as well as his growing regional reputation as an upcoming ceremonial orator. In announcing Webster’s selection, Society member William Hunt pronounced that “[n]o man is better qualified to trace the influence of the Fathers and their policy through successive generations down to the present hour” and that he would be yet another speaker

“among the most distinguished of New England” (Seelye 1998, 64). By 1820, Webster had retired from Congress, but not before speaking out fervently against the Missouri Compromise and reportedly bringing tears to the eyes of the Supreme Court justices in his work on the Dartmouth case (Remini 1997, 156; Smith 2005, 47). His selection would again prove noteworthy.

Webster arrived in Plymouth on December 21st to an atmosphere of anticipation and spent the following morning surveying the site where he would deliver the address. After considerable debate and some re-staging, Webster decided to speak not from the historical church’s pulpit but rather the deacon’s seat below to encourage an appearance of humility and put him closer to his audience (Smith 2005, 58). Although initially considered an inappropriate vantage point for such a prominent individual, no one could argue with what came from the communion rail that day. Regional press regarded the address as “everything which had been anticipated” (Seelye 1997, 79) while attendee George Ticknor added that Webster had delivered a “collection of wonderful fragments of burning eloquence, to which his manner gave tenfold force” (Bartlett 1972, 83; Remini 1997, 184).

The address was so well received that the members of the Plymouth Society approached Webster about preparing a manuscript for publication. Although the printed version would not appear for nearly a year, it too was met with considerable accolade; among its readers was former President John Adams who was mentioned in the speech. Adams was reportedly so impressed with the work that he replied to

Webster, calling the oration “the effort of a great mind, richly stored with every species of information” (Browne 1993, Remini 1997, 186).

Rock, People, Slavery

Webster’s oration at Plymouth demonstrates three remarkable features. By steeping his condemnation of slavery in effluent praise for the “natural” system put in place by the Pilgrims and packaging the contrast in stark dark-light metaphors he accomplishes two things. First, he argues that the work of the first settlers in Plymouth, guided by divine will, formed the foundation of the American philosophy. Bolstered by the sense of determinism created through the light-dark contrast, his argument suggests that the audience need only follow in their ancestors’ footsteps with similarly pious thought and minimal action to ensure the endeavor’s success. Second, he proclaims that any advancement of the “unnatural” and therefore dark institution of slavery will threaten the positive work begun there. Additionally, he incorporates a trio of themes, complementary to the society’s conservative Presbyterianism, that would emerge as his rhetorical calling card later in his career: the idea of America as a blessed nation, the sense of debt owed by America to both God and her forefathers, and the duty Americans had to uphold the Union, the Constitution, and their system of government. Together, these three features both enhance his construction of a conservative public memory of Plymouth and help him reassert New England’s claim to its place as America’s national foundation. Further explication of the 1820 Plymouth oration will demonstrate how Webster’s strategic

use of light-dark archetypal metaphors allow him to simultaneously align the “natural” with the privileged, permanent, and providential, make an exceptionally limited sense of personal agency seem not only attractive but advisable, and provide the audience with concrete cues for appropriate ways to both support and participate in the continuation of their ancestors’ works. Such continuation, he contends, is all that is needed reestablish New England as America’s philosophical center.

The address begins with a flourish of light-related imagery, tying the historic past with the present. Webster pronounces: “Let us be thankful that we have lived to see the bright and happy breaking of the auspicious morn, which commences the third century of the history of New England. Auspicious, indeed – bringing a happiness beyond the common allotment of Providence to men, - the full of present joy, and gilding with bright beams the prospect of futurity, is the dawn that awakens us to the commemoration of the landing of the Pilgrims” (Webster 1853b, 5). From the start his strategic use of the natural daylight cycle reduces the audience’s participation to sentiment. Dawn has broken, a natural continuance of the night before requiring no human intervention, and those present were privileged enough to behold the day’s events.

He continues, calling Plymouth the “place of our fathers’ refuge,” and asking the audience to accompany him on his rhetorical journey to the day when the first fathers stepped upon the shore, weary and weather-beaten, noting that were it not for the providential Pilgrims, those assembled would not be enjoying their present prosperity (Webster, 1853b, 5-6). The audience is not simply there for a historical

recounting, though. Webster introduces the idea that they can take an active role in continuing their forefathers' works primarily through contemplation but also through some limited action, stating:

By ascending to an association with our ancestors; by contemplating their example and studying their character; by partaking their sentiments and imbibing their spirit; by accompanying them in their toils, by sympathizing in their sufferings, and rejoicing in their successes and triumphs; we seem to belong to their age, and to mingle our own existence with theirs. We become their contemporaries, live the lives which they lived, endure what they endured, and partake in the rewards which they enjoyed. And in like manner, by running along the line of future time, by contemplating the probable fortunes of those who are coming after us, by attempting something which may promote their happiness, and leave some not dishonorable memorial of ourselves for their regard, when we shall sleep with the fathers we protract our own earthly being, and seem to crowd whatever is future, as well as all that is past, into the narrow compass of our earthly existence. (Webster 1853b, 5-6)

The idea that “attempting something which may promote their happiness and leave some not dishonorable memorial of ourselves for their regard” (Webster 1853b, 6) both resonates with Presbyterian notion that the divine plan in motion requires only minimal human intervention and allows him to set the stage for the his ultimate request, that Americans reject the idea and practice of human slavery. Here such intellectual endeavors as “contemplating their example,” “studying their character,” “rejoicing in their successes,” and “partaking of their sentiments” substitute for more bold initiatives which may, in the conservative Presbyterian tradition, endanger the positive outcome of the divine plan.

Further, having introduced the concept that a continuation of the Pilgrims' good works is possible through a thorough examination and replication of their lives,

he emphasizes the themes of debt and duty, reminding his audience that they are there for a reason, specifically, “to perform the duties which that relation and the present occasion impose upon us” (Webster 1853b, 7). By paying not just lip service but also homage to the Pilgrims and their piety, simply expressing sympathy for their sufferings and gratitude for their labors, as well as celebrating the *ideas* of civil and religious liberty which they brought with them, the audience would begin to repay the debt they owed to their “ancestors” and retain New England’s privileged place in America. Again, it is important to note that throughout the address Webster is not suggesting that the audience members need to act as much as they need to think and feel in the appropriate, “natural” ways brought about by devout reflection to do their part.

But the Pilgrims’ deeds alone were not Webster’s total focus. Throughout the opening, the strategic importance of the natural location also resonates, asserting Plymouth’s, and by extension New England’s, historical and philosophical value to the growing nation. Knowing full well that the address would later be published, he acknowledges the settlers’ lingering spirit in detail by exclaiming that “[t]here is a local feeling connected with this occasion, too strong to be resisted; a sort of *genius of the place*, which inspires and awes us. We feel that that we are on the spot where the first scene of our history was laid; where the hearths and altars of New England were first placed; where Christianity and civilization, and letters made their first lodgment, in a vast extent of country covered with a wilderness, and peopled by roving barbarians” (Webster 1853b, 8-9). He then contrasts the permanence of such a

“natural” location with the often-fleeting importance placed on the “unnatural” site of a military battle. He continues support for his argument that Plymouth is a sacred and permanent place by noting that the battlefields of military conquests fade from memory without lasting consequence whereas the birthplaces of righteous government prevail through the ages. He illustrates his point with a historical example, comparing the Pilgrims’ errand to the Athenian mission, stating:

‘If we conquer,’ said the Athenian commander on the approach of that decisive day, ‘if we conquer, we shall make Athens the greatest city of Greece.’ A prophecy, how well fulfilled! ‘If God prosper us,’ might have been the more appropriate language of our fathers, when they landed upon this Rock, ‘if God prosper us, we shall here plant a new society, in the principles of the fullest liberty and the purest religion; we shall subdue this wilderness which is before us; we shall fill this region of the great continent, which stretches almost from pole to pole, with civilization and Christianity; the temples of the true God shall rise, where now ascends the smoke of idolatrous sacrifice;. . . from our zeal for learning, institutions shall spring which shall scatter the light of knowledge throughout the land. (Webster 1853b, 10-11)

He anchors his claim in the contrast between natural providential progress and overbearing human action and highlights his argument in support of the Pilgrims’ pure ideals with a light metaphor. Because the Athenians sought to spread their power and create a city by taking aggressive action and conquering those around them, he argues, they ultimately failed. Therefore, the Athenian conquest as the scene of the battle and bold action that went against a larger divine plan. In comparison, he notes, the Pilgrims sought to bring the philosophy of liberty and the light of knowledge and civility to an untamed and idolatrous land as a part of a larger providential plan. The purity and piety of their errand carried additional divine favor and the endeavor is well on the path to success. In establishing the birthplace of a

new government in line with God's plan Plymouth would not befall the same tragedy as Greece. Where the limited ability to act Webster presents through the contrast between agency and nature may seem unattractive on the face, the pervasive sense of providential progress common to the time period makes it quite appealing to the audience. As the errand exists as a part of a larger divine plan, all that those assembled must do to continue the present, positive condition in Plymouth is uphold the intellectual and spiritual traditions the Pilgrims began on that spot two hundred years earlier. To actively attempt to change that which was handed down to them could cause the errand to end more like the Athenian conquest.

Following in the tradition of such a commemorative oration, Webster recites a detailed account of the group's journey, both philosophically and physically from England to the shores of Holland and ultimately to the fortress of Plymouth. Here again, he emphasizes the providential nature of the location adding further support to his argument that Plymouth is the natural philosophical center of the nation, exclaiming: "Thanks be to God that this spot was honored as the asylum of religious liberty! May its standard, reared here, remain for ever! May it rise up as high as heaven, till its banner shall fan the air of both continents, and wave as a glorious ensign of peace and security to the nations!" (Webster 1853b, 14). Hinting at the image of city on the hill,¹ he continues, contrasting the new American colony to those attempted by Greece, Rome, and the European nations and noting that the later

¹ Such imagery, originally taken from the book of Matthew [5.14], permeates his Bunker Hill Monument address. During the Second Great Awakening, new audiences of the faithful were being introduced to the works of early American religious leaders such as Winthrop.

experiments failed because of a lack of natural foundation and sense of permanency among their peoples. Plymouth, he argues, flourishes because the founders cultivated an immediate attachment to their new natural home and built a permanent foundation of civil, religious, and intellectual freedom, which had been formed before the group even set foot on the land. Still more evidence that the region continued to serve an important purpose to the expanding nation as well as a subtle warning that forgetting Plymouth and the events that occurred could send the nation on a trajectory similar to that of the fallen Greek, Rome, and European societies. Once again, Webster interjects the privileging of nature and the natural (the successful Plymouth colony) over imposed human action (the failed Greek, Roman, and European colonization efforts). Of course, Webster's discussion of Plymouth as a place would not be complete without mention of the rock itself. Although the group was not assembled to erect a monument to the landing per se, a physical reminder did exist. Here, he turns the unassuming lump of granite into the new society's bedrock, calling it "a foundation for great public prosperity and future empire" (Webster 1853b, 15). Yet again, the rock in its natural and permanent state serves as metaphorical foundation for continuing providential progress and a physical reminder of the area's importance.

Furthering his comparison between the ancient civilizations and America with a light-dark contrast and description in natural terms, Webster praises the colonists' work, stating: "Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature; and, more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who

would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun? Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for an origin obscured in the darkness of antiquity? (Webster 1853b, 22). By constructing the dark, thus Godless and immoral, ages as the life in Europe that the Pilgrims escaped and the prosperous and progressive enlightened days ahead as those based on the settlers' works, he strengthens his argument that the audience's continued work on behalf of their ancestors would likely assure America a bright and prosperous future. In this passage, the light-dark contrast allows Webster to imply a sense of inevitability. By leaving a dark and unnatural state and believing in a more enlightened and progressive system, the group was able to vastly improve their lot. They need not act much to reduce the darkness; just as lighting a candle would inevitably illuminate a dark room and make it fit for use, their cultivated minds would tame the wilderness and make the land fit for a government based on liberty. However, that future would not be entirely cloudless.

To further underscore the group's success and herald its accomplishments, he enumerates the challenges faced by the second generation of founders which lead to the Revolution, adding that "[s]ome retrospect of the century which has now elapsed is among the duties of the occasion" (Webster 1853b, 26-7). As in the previous passage he relies on light imagery to represent a "natural" passing, although this time greatness passes from one generation to the next as though it is the natural progression of a day.

Great men had arisen in public life, and the liberal professions. The Mathers, father and son, were then sinking low in the western horizon;

Leverett, the learned, the accomplished, the excellent Leverett, was about to withdraw his brilliant and useful light. In Pemberton great hopes had been suddenly extinguished, but Prince and Coleman were in our sky; and along the east had begun to flash the crepuscular light of a great luminary which was about to appear, and which was to stamp the age with his own name, as the age of Franklin. (Webster 1853b, 27)

By again describing this greatness in natural, celestial, terms rather than as the result of direct human action, he remains consistent with the idea of providential progress.

To demonstrate the success of this second, equally luminous generation, he turns his attention back to England, recalling the atrocities of Charles the Second, James the Second, Andros, and the Stewarts and noting that the settlers persevered due to the strength of the New World's foundations of piety, moral principle, and social enlightenment as well as commercial engagement. He then extends his praise to the present, calling John Adams "a descendant of the Pilgrims; one who has been attended through life by great and fortunate genius; a man illustrious by his own great merits, and favored of Heaven in the long continuation of his years" (Webster 1853b, 31). Ever mindful of the need to assert New England's continued influence, he reminds the audience and his future readers that Pilgrim descendants, such as President Adams, continue their works in the highest levels of government. By again noting the success of those whose thoughts continued the Pilgrim legacy and garnered divine favor, he further implies that those present simply need to think similarly, as that alone would support providential progress.

To further substantiate his claim, Adams' intellectual history, from Declaration of Independence to Constitution, becomes Webster's evidence. Again,

he demonstrates that those who honored and continued the philosophical intent of the Pilgrims in their work prospered, as did the nation by extension.

He to whom I have alluded, then at the age of forty, was among the most zealous and able defenders of the violated rights of his country . . . Something more than a courageous hope, or characteristic ardor, would have been necessary to impress the glorious prospect on his belief, if, at that moment, before the sound of the first shock of actual war had reached his ears, some attendant spirit had opened to him the vision of the future . . . that he himself, during the next annual revolution of the sun, should put his own hand to the great instrument of independence, and write his name where all nations should behold it and all time should not efface it, and that on the morning of this auspicious day he should be found in the political councils of his native State, revising, by the light of experience, that system of government which forty years before he had assisted to frame and establish; and, great and happy as he should then behold his country, there should be nothing in prospect to cloud the scene, nothing to check the ardor of that confident and patriotic hope which should glow in his bosom to the end of his long protracted and happy life. (Webster 1853b, 32)

In this extended praise of Adams, Webster includes two different types of light-related images. References to the celestial cycle, including “the next annual revolution of the sun” and “on the morning of this auspicious day” are used in a similar fashion to those mentioned in the introduction, to artfully imply the passage of time. However, the second set of references has greater strategic value. Using the positive/negative associations inherent in the light/dark contrast, and aligning it with the “new,” Webster crafts Adams’ experience into the light that guides him through his important work on the Constitution and his belief in and optimism about the American system into the fire that fueled him in his final days. Here he is extending the early divinely-inspired works of the Pilgrims through their descendants as this use

of light as wisdom and hope parallels Webster's use of light as knowledge and purity of ideal earlier in the address.

As additional support for this claim, Webster notes that the individuals who followed in Adams' footsteps of enlightened thought also found divine favor and prosper accordingly, winning the Revolutionary war, expanding American holdings westward, improving conditions internally through stronger infrastructure, and bolstering navigation, trade, and wealth. Once again, he impresses upon his audience that those individuals who think and feel in ways commensurate with the original Pilgrim mission find favor with God and see success in their endeavors, including the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Revolution.²

From using Adams and his philosophical descendants to celebrate the Union and the Constitution in action, Webster turns to an explanation of the American form of government, stating that "[t]he nature and constitution of society and government in this country are interesting topics, to which I would devote what remains of the time allowed to this occasion. . . It originates entirely with the people, and rests on no other foundation than their assent" (Webster 1853b, 34).³ In addition to a compact explanation of his own political philosophy, the point marks a shift in the address from the commemoration of the Pilgrims as a distinct people to their philosophy. Here he advances that the free holding of property is something belonging to the nation. The shift is most apparent in his next lines.

² The "canonization" of founding documents occurring during this time period, thanks to the Second Great Awakening, would add additional support to Webster's argument in the eyes of his audience.

³ Although appearing to be a significant departure from the natural metaphors found throughout the address, it is likely that the wording reflects Webster's Whig idea of representative government as fundamentally irreducible.

There is a natural influence belonging to property, whether it exists in many hands or few . . . Our ancestors began their system of government here under a condition of comparative equality in regard to wealth, and their early laws were of a nature to favor and continue this equality. . . Our New England ancestors brought hither no great capitals from Europe; and if they had, there was nothing productive in which they could have been invested. They left behind them the whole feudal policy of the other continent. . . Their situation demanded a parceling out and division of the lands, and it may be fairly said, that this necessary act *fixed the future frame and form of their government*. (Webster 1853b, 35)

Once again Webster strategically marks the contrast between the grandiose European tradition that the Pilgrims left behind and the far simpler, “natural,” and more democratic form of government that they established. Where one might believe that owning land was grandiose, he dispatches the notion with his pronouncement that property ownership provides a “natural” influence as opposed to the more contrived and military European forms of influence. He continues the idea of property holding as “natural,” citing how the free holding of property positively affects wealth as well as military force, political power, suffrage, education, and industry, stating that “a great revolution in regard to property must take place, before our governments can be moved from their republican basis” because a people have no desire to overturn a government which protects their property, thus requiring little concern for the internal safety of the system (Webster 1853b, 39). This is of particular importance given the decidedly insecure feeling of those in the region at the time. Although the nation was undergoing enormous change, he reminds the audience that the natural and enlightened system introduced by the First Settlers was succeeding. The prevalent belief in providential progress within the audience allows Webster to both assure

them that the change is part of the larger plan while at the same time pronounce the system itself as secure, due to the Pilgrim's divinely-favored legacy.

He makes a similar argument in regard to the cultural and intellectual climate of the age, noting that the early settlers "constantly maintained the principle, that it is the undoubted right and the burden duty of government to provide for the instruction of all youth. That which is elsewhere left to chance or to charity, we secure by law" (Webster 1853b, 39). He is also quick to note that this "burden duty" is, in fact, an investment as it continues to purify the country's moral atmosphere and wards off a necessary expansion of the penal code by fostering a "feeling of respectability, and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment" (Webster 1853b, 42). Commensurate with the conservative Presbyterian idea that the "providential scheme of things was already oriented toward 'improvement'" (Bozeman 1977, 711) and that man's duty was not to advance the divine timetable but rather act as a gradual "leaven of good" (Bozeman 1977, 712), Webster is able to strengthen his assertion that Plymouth deserves to be America's moral epicenter of by highlighting both the security and high moral character of the present age. The Pilgrim legacy was one of character, respectability, and learning and those present could do their part to further Plymouth's original charge by continuing that "duty."

As would logically follow, the ideas of elevated character and moral purity fostered by the first settlers stem from the importance they placed on religion.

Webster strategically attaches governmental stability to religious and moral principles, again emphasizing his point with an allusion to light, pronouncing that:

Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Living under the heavenly light of revelation, they hoped to find all the social dispositions, all the duties which men owe to each other and to society, enforced and performed. Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. (Webster 1853b, 44)

Here he introduces the second “natural” foundation to government, that of morality and religion, to compliment the natural holding of property. And once again, that natural foundation finds divine favor under the “heavenly light of revelation,” consistent with the conservative view promulgated throughout the address. It is important to note the order of the wording in the final line. It appears as if Webster is prioritizing the foundations as morality and religion over property ownership, likely to the pleasure of his conservative audience.

He closes the section by echoing the pervasive old school Presbyterian ideal that those present are bound to honor and protect the systems set in place by their Pilgrim ancestors and blessed by God. Commensurate with providential progress, doing so will assure continued prosperity. Here echoes of Winthrop’s Shining City prophecy appear again, although with a more ominous ending.

We are in the line of conveyance, through which whatever has been obtained by the spirit and efforts of our ancestors is to be communicated to our children. We are bound to maintain public liberty, and, by the example of our own systems, to convince the world that order and law, religion and morality, the rights of conscience, the rights of persons, and the rights of property, may all be preserved and secured, in the most perfect manner, by a government entirely and

purely elective. If we fail in this, our disaster will be signal, and will furnish an argument, stronger than yet has been found, in support of those opinions which maintain that government can rest safely on nothing but power and coercion. (Webster 1853b, 44-5)

Once again echoing the Presbyterian belief in humans' limited role in divine progress, should Americans fail to simply uphold the high moral character passed down from their Pilgrim ancestors, approve of slavery, and sever the "line of conveyance" of values and morals to the successive generations, the region and by continuance the country will fall into disgrace and potential despotism. This significant tumble from grace will also serve as proof to those who oppose the American philosophy that freedom equates with failure. By relying on the prominent belief of the day, Webster is able to remind the audience that they are the recipients of God's plan, through their ancestors, and that they need only continue to think as their ancestors thought and behave as they behaved to continue to curry divine favor.

After celebrating Plymouth Rock and the work of those who found foundation there, Webster uses the waning moments of his address to contrast the honorable free holding of property with the stain of slavery. As a moral, religious people of Pilgrim heritage with a duty to honor and protect the founding institutions, Americans also have a responsibility to obliterate human trafficking if they wish to see continued prosperity. Here, his light-dark contrast is greatest as is the contrast between the nation and people he had just described and the horror of slavery.

At the moment when God in his mercy has blessed the Christian world with a universal peace, there is a reason to fear, that, to the disgrace of the Christian name and character, new efforts are making for the extension of this trade [slavery] by subjects and citizens of Christian states, in whose hearts there dwell no sentiments of humanity or of

justice, and over whom neither the fear of God nor the fear of man exercises a control. . . There is no brighter page of our history, than that which records the measures which have been adopted by the government at an early day, and at different times since, for the suppression of this traffic; and I would call on all the true sons of New England to cooperate with the laws of man, and the justice of Heaven. If there be, within the extent of our knowledge or influence, any participation in this traffic, let us pledge ourselves here, upon the rock of Plymouth, to extirpate and destroy it. It is not fit that the land of the Pilgrims should bear the same longer. I hear the sound of the hammer, I see the smoke of the furnaces where manacles and fetters are still forged for human limbs. I see the visages of those who by stealth and at midnight labor in this work of hell, foul and dark, may become the artificers of such instruments of misery and torture. (Webster 1853b, 45-6)⁴

Webster's use of light-dark contrast in the passage allows him to further develop the idea of inevitability. The "brighter page[s]" of American history will record the times when the "midnight labor" of slavery is abolished and New England cooperates with the "justice of Heaven." He appeals to the "true sons" of the region to "pledge" themselves to support such legislation and stop any other forms of its support as doing so would disgrace the memories of their ancestors. Once again, the "natural" form of Plymouth rock appears in the passage as further physical reminder of the Pilgrims.

He continues his call to action, demanding that judges, clergy, and working man alike do all in their power to eradicate slavery, warning that the skies no longer smile and the "sun is cast down from heaven" for both those who live in slavery and those who allow slavery to live (Webster 1853b, 46). In doing so, he ties together his

⁴ Despite claiming that he had opposed slavery "from his earliest youth" Webster's 7th of March address, a response to the Wilmot Proviso, has been interpreted as conciliatory to slave owners. However, Webster firmly asserted that the address was meant to preserve the union and place the blame of its potential dissolution on both the North and the South (Remini 1997).

three themes, anchoring all in the foundation of Plymouth Rock and firmly placing the nation's philosophical center in New England. The chosen people of the blessed nation, beholden to God and the Founders, are bound to protect their way of life and system of government by affording others the same privileges and blessings. They could accomplish just that, he argues, by continuing the work of the Pilgrims, stating: "[W]e can entertain no better wish for our country, than that this government may be preserved; nor have a clearer duty than to maintain and support it" (Webster 1853b, 48).

Webster closes with a bright vision for the nation's future should those present continue the natural and philosophical work of their forbearers, stating:

On the morning of that day, although it will not disturb us in our repose, the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through the millions of the sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas . . . We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting truth! Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you, as you rise in your long succession, to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence where we are passing, and soon shall have passed, our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies and the verdant fields of New England. (Webster 1853b, 49-50)

Webster's final light metaphor echoes the address' opening strains and the audience's participation is again reduced to a gesture. Within the natural cycle of events, the day has again begun and as is expected, they are long gone, however, their pious thoughts in support of the philosophical system brought to New England by their Pilgrim ancestors afford their descendents the same blessings that they had enjoyed. His

utopian vision is thus able to remind those present that by upholding the high moral character of the Pilgrims, failing to support human slavery, and spreading progress, knowledge, and Christianity, New Englanders could curry divine favor in the same way as their ancestors had. Within the framework of providential progress, doing so would also ensure the future of their region and of the nation, allowing them to reclaim their rightful place as America's philosophical foundation.

Conclusion

Daniel Webster delivered a forty-five page, near two-hour, rhetorical celebration of the Pilgrim legacy on December 22, at the 200th anniversary celebration of the Mayflower's arrival. The address was pronounced meticulously researched, painstakingly polished, and impressively performed (Lewis 1969, 26-28; Smith 1989; Remini 1997, 184) by critics and fans alike and was said to have put Webster on the literary map (Bartlett 1978, 85). Delivered during a time of great geographical, economic, and political strain on the national level, Webster sought to create a public memory of Plymouth and its First Settlers that reestablished the town as the nation's moral center and to begin to cast him as a potential presidential candidate. Working within the conservative "old school" Presbyterian worldview of providential progress, he leveraged the stark contrasts embodied in the archetypal light-dark relationship to compare the old and unnatural (oppression, slavery, stagnation) with the new and natural (democracy, freedom, and improvement), deepening the divide between the old European sectarianism and new American

nationalism. The sense of inevitability and determinism inherent in the light-dark contrast also allowed him to make the limited sense of agency embodied by the providential worldview attractive to the audience as he issued his challenge; continue the pious works of your ancestors, through your thoughts and feelings, oppose the institution of slavery, and assure a bright future or fail and be an ominous example for the world.

With his name now known and respected in the public sphere for more than his forensic argumentation, Webster returned briefly to the courtroom before emerging five years later to commemorate a second landmark in American history, the Revolutionary battle fought at Bunker Hill at the laying of the memorial's cornerstone. While as the philosophical center of the nation, Plymouth might "rise up as high as heaven, till its banner shall fan the air of both continents, and wave as a glorious ensign of peace and security to the nations!" (Webster 1853b, 14), he would proclaim that as the moral center, Breed's Farm in Boston, was "a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever" (Webster 1853b, 78).

CHAPTER FOUR

Glowing Granite Memorials, Monuments, and Memories

No sooner had the smoke from Revolutionary cannons cleared than plans were in the works for a memorial to General Warren and his fallen men. Within a year of the Battle of Bunker Hill, Congress resolved to erect two memorials to America's first Revolutionary martyrs, one to Warren in Boston and the other to General Mercer in Fredericksburg. However it would take nearly a half-century and several stalled attempts by state legislatures and freemasons to bring the resolution to reality (Webster 1832b; Seelye 1998). Within those 50 years, the young nation underwent sweeping change. Revolutionary heroes were dying off, replaced by a new generation excited by progress and reveling in the growing affluence of the rising middle class. An alarming rise in sectionalism as well as social and commercial momentum threatened to pull the country apart and the political system was becoming increasingly polarized. Federalists and Democrat-Republicans regularly did battle in Congress and in the press (Remini 1997, 243-46). Seemingly simple governmental actions often took on a sectionalist flavor, holding up legislation in heated debates. The country's hard-fought unity no longer seemed assured and public leaders worried that the national cohesiveness fostered by the Revolution would begin to dissolve as the memory of America's founding and subsequent struggle for nationhood faded and American borders pushed south and westward

(Purcell 2002, 137). Ironically, as the Era of Good Feeling dawned, New England was feeling anything but positive.

However, the optimism, patriotic fervor, and orchestrated emotionalism called into existence by the era coupled with its associated monument boom afforded the region an opportunity to leverage its historic past and remind the nation of its importance. The approaching fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill along with a yearlong US tour by the Marquis de Lafayette provided just the opportunity Boston and New England needed to rekindle regional pride and reassert its prominence (Purcell 2002, 172). With the monument's cornerstone as a backdrop and Daniel Webster as its mouthpiece the Bunker Hill Memorial Association would create a memorial celebration unequalled in the young country's history. Bolstered by the presence of foreign and domestic dignitaries and Revolutionary veterans, the Laying of the Cornerstone was for Webster "an omphalos that permanently located the genius of Liberty (hence the moral force of the nation) within the precincts of Boston" (Seelye 1998, 425) and increased his personal political stock. Leveraging the period's strong and conservative Calvinist belief in "providential progress" (Bozeman 1977, 711) Webster would intertwine his now familiar themes of freedom, independence, progress, and gratitude within light/dark contrasts and natural metaphors to position the Battle of Bunker Hill, not unlike the landing at Plymouth, among the young country's founding events. By again casting the "natural" American experiment as a "light" foil to a dark and military European tradition and fostering a sense of inevitable success thanks to divine favor, he would create a

conservative yet privileged public memory of the Revolution. This idea that the Revolutionary victory was the realization of the providential “shining city” vision would anchor his pronouncement that Boston was America’s moral foundation. Considered a cornerstone of American ceremonial address (Smith 1989; Seelye 1998), the First Bunker Hill Monument Address locates Boston as the beacon of American morality (Seelye 1998, 425) and seeks to restate New England’s claim on Americanism.

Memorializing Bunker Hill

The Bunker Hill Memorial Association was founded in 1823 by a group of prominent Massachusetts citizens to organize and oversee the funding, design, and placement of a permanent memorial to those who lost their lives in the Battle of Bunker Hill. The Memorial Association’s founding document drafted by Webster declared, “not a single monument worthy of being named has hitherto been elevated” (Matteson 2001, 421) and pledged to remedy the situation. In keeping with the culture of the early nineteenth century, particularly the decade of the 1820’s, the Association members saw their task as largely educational, preserving the stories, heroes, places, and thereby the values, of the not so distant past in the face of what many saw as an erosion of principles in the modern era (Matteson 2001, 420). Motivated further by the loss of New England’s political prominence after the Missouri Compromise, the group declared their intention “to carry down to remote ages a testimony, consecrated by the patriotism of the present generation, to the

heroic virtue and courage' of the Revolutionary soldiers" (Matteson 2001, 420-21) and establish "a monument worthy . . . of the cause to which it will be consecrated" (Matteson 2001, 421).

The project commenced with a certain sense of urgency, as the fiftieth anniversary of the battle was fast approaching and the number of surviving veterans of the battle was dwindling just as rapidly. In an account of the project written by George Washington Warren fifty years after the fact, Webster is also credited with justifying the preservation of the battlefield from the encroaching urban sprawl of nearby Boston and Charlestown, noting that the land "is yet open; but the rapid increase of population in its vicinity will soon cause it to be parceled out and occupied with buildings, when the ashes of the brave who repose there will be dug up and scattered" (Matteson 2001, 421). With the ceremony scheduled for June 17, 1825 and the design assigned to sculptor Horatio Greenough, the Bunker Hill Memorial Association set out to raise the funds to secure the monument and plan the dedicatory events.

Following the death of the Association's first president, Massachusetts Governor John Brooks, the board of trustees elected Webster to serve out the office (Remini 1997, 247). Soon after the board unanimously agreed that he too should deliver the address at the laying of the cornerstone due in large part to his reputation as a ceremonial orator earned with his performance of the Plymouth oration (Matteson 2001, 422) as well as his prominence as a Supreme Court lawyer. Adding to the occasion's festivities would be the presence of the Marquis de Lafayette who

would be touring the states during the commemoration as well as approximately 200 Revolutionary war veterans, forty of whom fought at the Battle of Bunker Hill (Webster 1853b, 58).

Although the Bunker Hill Memorial Association trustees were confident in their choice of speaker, Webster himself was not so positively disposed (Wiltse 1976, 32-33). While neither the subject nor the setting was of concern to him, the audience was another story. In particular Webster worried that his remarks and performance would not adequately honor General Lafayette. However, with the encouragement of fellow Association members, Webster reluctantly agreed to the task. With his eye to its eventual publication, Webster wrote, rewrote, and polished the address up until the event (Wiltse 1976, 55). In a June 15, 1825 letter to longtime friend George Ticknor, Webster remarks of the speech, “‘I did the deed’ this morning – i.e. that is I finished my [Bunker Hill] Speech - & I am pretty well persuaded it is a speech that will *finish* me – as far as reputation is concerned. There is no more tone in it, than in the weather in which it has been written – it is ‘perpetual dissolution & thaw’” (Wiltse 1975, 55).

His concern could be easily understood because it was certainly no secret that he had political ambitions beyond his present station as a Massachusetts Representative (Remini 1997, 244-46). While his reputation as a great orator possessing a fine legal mind was of benefit, he would also need to present himself as a statesman to be seen as a serious Presidential contender. At that time, any man with an eye to higher public office would have to provide, at minimum, a measure of his

ability to navigate the choppy political waters and ideally, a glimpse of his ability to calm the rough national seas. The upcoming oration offered Webster just that, an opportunity to showcase his nationalistic philosophy to a mass audience, both those on hand for the event and those who would later read the address in pamphlet form.

Despite earlier predictions of inclement weather, June 17, 1825 dawned clear and temperate as Bostonians awoke to the blast of a cannon, announcing the start of the day's festivities. Swelled by the presence of the foreign dignitary, the crowd numbered twenty thousand or more, according to eyewitness accounts (Remini 1997, 248). Following a parade to the battlefield, the laying of the cornerstone, and the seating of Lafayette, the surviving veterans, and other distinguished guests, the ceremony began with a traditional prayer and hymn. Panic threatened to disrupt the solemn ceremony when a barricade collapsed in the crowd. However the marshals on the scene deferred to Webster who was able to calm the crowd with a single, thunderous, command for silence (Remini 1997, 249).

Upon restoration of order he again began the address that moved many in the audience to tears before ending to thunderous applause, cementing Webster's place in the pantheon of great American orators. The day's celebration culminated with a dinner for four thousand at the battle site followed by a private reception in Webster's Boston home for the more notable attendees, co-hosted by neighbor Colonel Israel Thorndike who was rumored to be New England's wealthiest man (Remini 1997, 252). Despite the buzz created by both the party and the address, which required at least five printings in the ensuing six months and was later translated into French and

other languages at the urging of the Marquis himself (Remini 1997, 247), Webster himself was highly critical of his efforts, complaining privately, “that he had offered a peculiarly dead speech” (Matteson 2001, 427).

Constructing Memories and Monuments

To achieve his purposes, Webster’s three-part strategy unfolded throughout the course of the speech. Early in the address, by highlighting the fact that the war’s opening battle occurred in Boston he would reassert the region’s importance in the defense of America as both a nation and a philosophy. Shifting slightly mid-address and framing the Revolution as the ultimate test of the fledgling nation, Webster could capitalize on the unifying power of the struggle. And as he concluded, building on the popular notion of providential progress, he could cast the victory as the realization of the vision of America as the city upon a hill articulated by John Winthrop and the earliest colonists (Winthrop 2005, 24). The forthcoming monument would, he argues, help keep these achievements fresh in the minds of men, but words were also necessary to craft the conservative public memory “to mark a spot which must for ever be dear to us and our prosperity” (Webster 1853b, 60).

Echoing themes utilized in the First Settlers address five years earlier, he unifies these evolving strategies with his use of light-dark and natural metaphors. As was the case in December of 1820, the presence of these allusions, working in concert with the widely-held belief in a divinely authored plan, provides a subtle yet powerful subtext throughout the speech, an “argument by archetype” (Osborne 1967). Such an

argument allows Webster to suggest not only that the series of events was inevitable, but also that the victory and ultimate success of the American system followed from the “natural” and noble purpose in which it was conceived. Although again appearing to limit human agency to mere thought and feeling, the sense of inevitability Webster fosters through his use of light-dark contrasts resonates with the modern “providential agenda” which calls upon the population to do their part by starting “from within” (Bozeman 1977, 712). Using the contrast and argument embodied in the light-dark family of archetypes to demonstrate the difference between the natural, independent, and enlightened future begun by the first settlers and continued by the Revolutionary heroes and the unnatural, dark, and fettered existence the early Americans escaped from in Europe, brings to life Webster’s claim that if Americans want an independent and enlightened future, they must further the positive work began by their New England ancestors. Being a Calvinist people “descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge” (Webster 1853b, 60), he argues that they must continue the legacy which includes favoring nature over the unnatural, freedom over bondage, peace over violence and, ultimately, national unity over sectionalism.

The strategy also allows Webster to make literal use of the suggestion first made by Winthrop that “We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies [and] when He shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations: ‘The Lord make it like that of New England;’ for we must consider that we shall be as [Matthew 5.14] a city

upon a hill” (Winthrop 2005, 35-36). The Revolutionary victory first won in Boston and continuing American progress does, in fact, make New England the shining city upon the hill for the rest of the nation to admire and aspire to.

Webster begins by setting a somber tone, thick with emotion, and appropriate for the era’s highly stylized remembrance. In doing so he was employing his first strategy: bringing forth the importance of the location and event, declaring that the blood shed by those who fought consecrated the ground and turned Bunker Hill from a mere grassy hillside into hallowed ground. “If, indeed, there be anything in local associations fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchers of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood” (Webster 1853b, 59). He also introduces the light-dark archetype and idea of the battle’s inevitability, with a contrast to the dark bloodstained ground, stating: “[I]f our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans” (Webster 1853b, 59).

Although the passage’s phrasing admittedly limits human agency by proclaiming that the event was the result of natural forces, such limitation would not be seen as unattractive to the audience given the era’s strong sense of providential progress. God’s plan would be carried out as long as man didn’t attempt to accelerate it, pull it off track with excessive action, or become morally corrupt. All humans had to do

was remain morally and philosophically pure and they would reap the benefits set in motion by divine process working through their forbearers.

Webster then positions the Battle of Bunker Hill among other founding events in the young country's history. By highlighting the struggles of the founders, he further reinforces the idea of inevitability but interjects a slight sense of human agency; present-day citizens are furthering a cause begun by those who came before simply through their ability to feel as their forefathers did:

We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to suffer and enjoy the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born. (Webster 1853b, 59)

The passage resonates with the sense of providence; their lot is cast and they will watch a series of events unfold. However Webster does not leave the audience to sit passively by and wait. Rather, he strategically offers the suggestion that, in the spirit of the gathering, all present should use the opportunity to reflect emotionally upon the events that brought them to that point in time. Such "natural" reflection brought on by the enormity of the events is not only proper but will also serve as the "cornerstone" for the conservative public memory of Bunker Hill and the Revolution that he intends to construct through the address.

To further the idea that the events were part of a larger chain, he touches upon Columbus' discovery of North America using a second light-dark allusion: "I may

say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea . . . till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world” (Webster 1853b, 60). The celestial cycle he uses deepens the sense of inevitability he seeks to build throughout the section. After nightfall, one would expect dawn and in the same sort of reliable pattern, after Columbus struggled valiantly to cross the ocean, he met with divine blessing and was rewarded with a glimpse of America’s shores. This parallels the “probable train of great events” and “happily cast” fortunes in the previous section and sets up his statement that Bostonians are “descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions” (Webster 1853b, 61) in the following passage.

His recounting of early colonization efforts, including a reference to the First Settlement and Plymouth Rock echoes his Plymouth address from 1820 and adds to the sense of lineage that he attempts to create. Replete with cues as to how the audience should think and feel, he recounts the settling before rhetorically book-ending American history with the Revolution, stating:

Nearer to our times and more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. . . But the great event, in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate; that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. (Webster 1853b, 60-61)

This American history lesson, albeit brief, both contextualizes the battle within the nation's founding moments and serves as a reminder of a not so coincidental, providential, series of events that lead the nation to its present place of international prominence further building the public memory Webster aims to achieve. Had it not been for the strength and steadfastness of Columbus, the patience and piety of the Pilgrims, and the passion and patriotism of the colonists, the American victory surely would not have been possible given the enormous odds they faced. However, the good works begun by the founders would yield the freedom enjoyed by all present, he argues, if the memory of the deeds endures. Once again, rather than take direct action, he suggests that the audience simply recount the events through thought and feeling. Although their fate is cast, their ability to think and feel in a pious and moral manner will assure the success of the American experiment. Similarly, in praising the Revolutionary veterans, he treats their success much like that of the first settlers, further stressing both inevitability and lineage with a light cycle allusion. He states: "[o]n the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like 'another morn, Risen on mid-noon'" (Webster 1853b, 65).

Turning the crowd's attention briefly to the monument, Webster reminds all attending that it will serve as a further, visual reminder of the events for the coming generations, consistent with the Memorial Association's intent. "We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. . . But our object is by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by

presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the revolution” (Webster 1853b, 61-62). Commensurate with the Calvinist idea that excessive action might endanger the progress of the divine plan, Webster is quick to note that the monument, a common product of the Era of Good Feeling, is intended to foster additional feeling and thought rather than to substitute for such necessary and appropriate reflection and sentiment.

After successfully elevating its status by setting the battle in the context of founding moments and pronouncing the monument as a visual symbol of continued American reflection and virtue, he is careful to dispel any idea that the obelisk was raised purely out of military victory, which would be both unnatural and antithetical to the peaceable, honorable, intent of both Columbus and the Pilgrims. “Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it forever” (Webster 1853b, 62). He is equally careful to remind all present that the memorial was erected in a spirit of gratitude to those who made the ultimate sacrifice, not in celebration of the violence of battle, noting:

We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land and of the happy influences which have been produced by the same events on the general interests of mankind. We come as Americans to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and

importance of that event to every class and every age. . . We wish that this column rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God may contribute also to produce in all minds a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. (Webster 1853b, 62)

This honoring of the “natural” and distinction of the peaceful, philosophical intent of the monument are critical to Webster’s argument, as a celebration of dark and unnatural militaristic spirit would be antithetical to the extension the shining city metaphor, which Winthrop was careful to outline as one of peaceable coexistence (Winthrop 2005, 35). To do so, Webster equates the monument and its values of peace, liberty, and knowledge with American progress while using another reference to light to interject the passage of time. The interplay of the day’s light upon the monument from dawn to dusk both demonstrates its timelessness, durability, and by extension, the inevitability of all it represents and elevates it to “beacon” status, the final realization of Winthrop’s vision. Webster proclaims: “We wish finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and the parting day linger and play on its summit” (Webster 1853b, 62).

Webster’s use of the daylight cycle in this section accomplishes two functions. First, it acts as further invitation to view the events in natural, and therefore good terms as opposed to an object of human agency, and therefore harmful. Additionally it emphasizes the passage of time and eases his transition from the first to second

strategy as he continues into the next section. As he continues to enrich the public memory he seeks to construct, he enumerates the vast progress America has made in the fifty years following the war, exclaiming: “We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important that they might crowd and distinguish centuries, are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life” (Webster 1853b, 63). Not unlike the way he compresses the passage of a day into a single play of light upon granite in his address, he also compacts a century of progress into the span of a single generation, again cloaking what some might interpret as human agency in positive and natural phenomena and also underlining the true greatness of events. Among these great and natural events, he includes the induction of 24 states to the Union, growth of the population from two to twelve million, addition of territories to the south and west, adequate revenue to extend the benefits of government with little taxation, and peace and commerce with other nations. Yet while America and by extension North America prospers he is quick to note most importantly, that Europe has not been as fortunate. He draws this contrast again using an extended allusion to light.

Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones which had stood tranquil for ages. On this, our continent, our own example has been followed, and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun; and at this moment the dominion of European power in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever. (Webster 1853b, 63)

In this passage, Webster continues to strategically construct the dark foil to the bright American light to enrich the public memory of Boston as the nation's moral center. Unnatural, militaristic, and dark European influence had existed "beyond the track of the sun" before the Revolution although American success and influence, those begun in Boston, now stretches all the way to the south pole and allows those gathered to "look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world" (Webster 1853b, 63).

He furthers this idea of a dark and violent Europe contrasting with a light and peaceful America in his account of General Warren's death during the opening salvos of the battle, stating: "Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage" (Webster 1853b, 65). With his last sentence, Webster adds an additional layer to his Europe/North America comparison, that of freedom or bondage, furthering the complexity of the contrast between the two continents. Again, by couching his argument in a natural metaphor and light-dark comparison, he hints at the sense of inevitability inherent in the contrast. Although Warren fell before he could be sure that the American cause would prevail even in his death he assisted the cause; his blood fertilizing the land. Further, Webster suggests through the dark to light progression that the victory was as inevitable as the daily celestial cycle, not unlike Boston's reestablishment as the nation's moral center. Though there may be momentary gloom, the American star will again rise.

Having broken ground on construction of the public memory he sought to erect by acknowledging the purpose for the gathering as well as those gathered and constructing Europe as America's foil in archetypal terms, he turns his attention briefly to the events leading up to the revolution. Doing so allows him to again highlight unity by demonstrating another time when Americans chose unity over sectionalism as well as add additional "bricks" to the towering memory he was creating. The colonies, perhaps against their individual interests, banded together against European oppression, took up the now American cause, and won the war for Independence. Webster recounts:

It had been anticipated, that while the Colonies in general would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns would be greedily enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intenseness of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people. Everywhere the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, everywhere, to show to the whole world that the Colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. (Webster 1853b, 67)

The strength afforded the Colonies based on this unity of sentiment is the same strength Americans can enjoy again, he argues, if they choose to overlook either personal gain or regional and political differences in favor of broader American values and ideals. It is important to note that Webster does not suggest that the colonies acted as much as that they felt, remaining complimentary to Calvinist views and acceptable to his audience.

This enduring belief in providential progress continues in the next line where he exclaims: “Blandishments . . . will not fascinate us, nor will threats of a halter intimidate; for, under God, we are determined that, wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men. The 17th of June saw the four New England Colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or fall together; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them for ever, one cause, one country, one heart” (Webster 1853b, 68). Once again he stresses that the colonists were not acting for personal gain but rather readying to heeding God’s call, should it come, to further the notion that the Revolution was not a militaristic venture but rather a natural and divinely inspired response. Doing so further purifies the public memory of the war and fits it neatly within the beliefs of the time period.

The presence of the Marquis de Lafayette provides Webster with a unique way to transition from the strong sense of American and European animosity during the war to the modern state of mutual friendship and unity through progress. He strengthens this link with yet another light-oriented yet divinely sanctioned metaphor, speaking directly to the dignitary:

Sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration. Fortunate, fortunate man! With what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain, that electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all

of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. (Webster 1853b, 70)

Webster strategically uses Lafayette's "spark," fostered by the Revolution and carried back to Europe as a purifying link between the two continents. The inspired and light, therefore positive concept of liberty would begin to brighten the darkened Europe, making a more positive relationship possible. Once again to compliment the theme of the divine plan and remain consistent with providential progress, he paints both Lafayette's and the audience's roles as passive, rather than as active agent of change. Where Lafayette is a conductor of a divinely issued light, the same can be said for the audience in the passage. Any "action" they might take is affective, deriving happiness from the Marquis' presence, cherishing his name and virtues, and receiving the legacy passed from prior generations. Even the "great changes" he enumerates are primarily intellectual and affective, including the sharing of knowledge across the seas, the use of diplomacy as opposed to force to settle differences and the open commerce of ideas all in the betterment of mankind (Webster 1853b, 71).

Crediting this progress to advancements in education, manufacturing, and most importantly popular government he advances the sense of inevitability through yet another light metaphor, proclaiming that "A day of peace has at length succeeded; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society" (Webster, 1853b, 72). Couching the progressive forces as primarily intellectual and affective and the results as positive natural and inevitable lends more support for his claim that the purifying events kindled in Boston have spread

throughout the world as part of the divine plan. Such influence, it follows, would surely situate Boston as the nation's, perhaps the world's moral center as that would be the logical end point of the plan articulated by the shining city vision.

He continues his praise of popular government, taking it a step further to representative government as further extension of his argument for Boston's moral centrality. With people's newfound knowledge through education and increased time due to advancements in labor, it only follows that the mind can turn to issues of the state and a clarion call for peace. Further celebrating the triumph of knowledge and reason over might as the rightful ruler of men, Webster offers more proof of the coming realization of Winthrop's vision through a particularly stark light-dark metaphor. Here, he contrasts the dazzling light of democracy with the darkness of the doctrine of unlimited power, noting: "Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams. The prayer of the Grecian champion, when enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness, is the appropriate political supplication for the people of every country not yet blessed with free institutions: - 'Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore, Give me to SEE, - and Ajax asks no more'" (Webster 1853b, 74). And where he equates democracy with the illuminating power of the sun, he sees civil and religious freedom existing as fire, equally powerful and ultimately irrepressible by human action or natural force. He states:

If the spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn.
Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it
may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains
may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave

both the ocean and the land and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven. (Webster 1853b, 75)

And he again offers the recent emergence of South American democracies as proof of not only the illumination but also as more support for the power of the American example, exclaiming:

. . . these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there has been, as it were, a new creation. The southern hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire. (Webster 1853b, 76)

The spread of civilization through the light of Democracy is possible, he argues, and South America is a glowing new example. In a continuation of the logic used in praise of Lafayette earlier, this additional spread is necessary, in fact critical, for the remainder of his argument that America has the potential to be the city on the hill. To be the world's moral beacon, Boston must possess and disseminate a "light" brighter and inextinguishable than any other. Throughout the address, although perhaps most starkly in this passage, Webster creates a reaffirming public memory of the American experiment of that light out of the civil and religious liberty, brought out of the darkness of Europe by the first settlers, defended despite the fog of war by the revolutionary generation, and passed down to those gathered for safekeeping.

And to complete the passing of that torch, he restates the task assigned to the fledgling country by Winthrop nearly 100 years prior:

And now let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced and is likely to produce on human freedom and human happiness. And let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude and to feel in all its importance the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws and a just administration. . . The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed that our example has become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty be sounded throughout the earth. (Webster 1853b, 76-77)

And then he proclaims its ultimate success, again in primarily natural, affective, and intellectual terms. “The principle of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it – immovable as its mountains” (Webster 1853b, 77). Again, his strategic description of the American legacy in natural terms aligns it with the positive and the light, making it a part of the beacon’s flame.

He concludes, heralding the realization of Winthrop’s vision, by returning to the illuminated place the monument will inhabit, stating “And by the blessing of God may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever” (Webster 1853b, 78). If Americans choose to be of “one cause, one country, one heart” (Webster 1853b, 68) and continue to venerate the values that the Revolutionary heroes fought and perished for, America would become a beacon to the world and New England could lay stake as the moral foundation, not

necessarily because of any vast human action, but rather because of a combination of divine plan and personal participation through intellectual and affective means.

Conclusion

The fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill occurred at a particularly fragile time in New England's history. Expansionism, sectional friction, and the passing of a founding generation threatened to undo much of the American unity the war for Independence had created as East, West, and South battled for political and cultural prominence. As the last vestiges of the Revolutionary generation passed away, they took their stories, and thus New England's valuable historical memory with them. The Bunker Hill Memorial Association took it upon themselves to preserve not only the land but also the lore of Bunker Hill through the construction of an "honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence" (Remini 1997, 247).

Capitalizing on the Calvinistic sense of providential progress, the orchestrated emotion of the Era of Good Feeling and the religious fervor of the Second Great Awakening, Daniel Webster constructed a luminous public memory to accompany the granite obelisk. By aligning the American legacy with the good and natural, he located Boston as the initial site where the colonies united to defend the American experiment and pronounced the war for Independence as the ultimate test of American independence, thus heralding the victory as the realization of a vision of America as the city upon a hill. By weaving the positive natural themes together with

metaphors of light and light dark contrast, Webster asserted a bright nationalistic philosophy celebrating peace and progress. In addition to being a second of his marquee epideictic speeches utilizing a light-inspired metaphor to drive the work, the address reiterates a set of three themes which will serve as rhetorical calling cards for the remainder of his oratorical career: America as a blessed nation, Americans as beholden to God and their forefathers for those blessings, and the need for Americans to honor and protect the Union, the Constitution, and their governmental system (Remini 1997). With the monument's cornerstone firmly in place, Webster's oration laid the foundation for New England's return to national and international prominence and elevated the orator into the United States Senate, representing the state of Massachusetts.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Despite being a rocky time in the nation's history, the 1820's were good to Daniel Webster. In addition to raising more money for the Monument Association in pamphlet form the Bunker Hill oration became a memorization lesson for both its historical and oratorical value in school books across the country. However, perhaps most importantly it did much to "reassure a skeptical nation" of New England's nationalist fervor, dispelling the myth that the region was "an isolated region of secessionists, a land of penny-pinching Yankees, conniving traders, and puritanical ministers preaching hellfire sermons to self-righteous bigots" (Remini 1997, 252). But America's "religious and romantic mood" (Smith 2005, 83) wouldn't last forever. A virtual tidal wave of popular and political sentiment would stretch the nation's boundaries from sea to shining sea.

Five years after his 1822 election to the House of Representatives, he won a Senate seat, representing the state of Massachusetts. He also appeared in front of the Supreme Court more than fifty times, making a fortune adjudicating maritime claims (Lewis 1978, 86). Throughout his long and sometimes controversial public career, stretching from New Hampshire assembly rooms to the Office of Secretary of State and back, Webster tirelessly struck a resounding chord of nationalism, ringing perhaps most truly in the line "for ever, one cause, one country, one heart" (Webster 1853b, 68). His speeches played a pivotal role in advancing Harrison's presidential

ambitions; however he would never realize his own goal of taking that sense of national unity all the way to the Oval Office. The untimely death of the Whig president a month after he took office sparked fierce posturing and infighting within the party ranks which Harrison's successor, John Tyler was unable to contain. By the time Webster delivered his second Bunker Hill address, eighteen years to the day of the first address, his political clout was all but gone (Smith 2005, 185). His decline, both politically and physically would continue for the next nine years as the nation again went to war, expanded,⁵ and took up the banner of manifest destiny. The strong imperialist impulses overwhelmed the gentler Whig agenda and Webster's nationalist themes were often mischaracterized by southern imperialists as pro-expansionist (Bartlett 1978; Smith 2005). Financial difficulties, deep depression stemming from the death of his wife and two children within three months, and failing health and mental decline from cirrhosis (Remini 1997, 753) prevented Webster from ever fully setting the record straight. Perhaps his death on October 24, 1852 saved him from the pain of seeing his beloved Union torn in two less than a decade later as civil war broke out.

The purpose of this project was to explain how Daniel Webster's use of natural place and the archetypal light-dark metaphors in the 1820 Plymouth and 1825 Bunker addresses creates enduring and conservative public memories of the founding events and attempts to reassert New England's philosophical and moral dominance in a time of extreme national change. The heightened sectional tensions, extreme

⁵ Webster delivered several speeches arguing that the annexation of Texas would threaten the Union, including a three-hour address in Albany, New York (Smith 2005, 189-90)

economic insecurity, seemingly endless cultural change and constant tension between progress and uncertainty that ushered in the dawn of the Era of Good Feeling left the region feeling anything but positive. Consequently, the early 1820's marked an unfortunate point in the adolescent nation's history as the Revolutionary heroes died off and the previous generations' hard-fought unity no longer seemed assured.

Within this struggle, the enigmatic orator-statesman took the stage not once, but twice within five years' time wading into New England's shallow pool of history, rhetorically lifting his beloved region from its "miserable, dirty squabble of local politics" (Lewis 1969, 89), and reuniting what he saw to be fractured and competing federal, Democratic, Bankrupt, Orthodox, and Middling interests under a proud regional banner. His use of natural place and light-dark archetypal metaphors allowed him to work within the period's conservative Presbyterian view of providential progress and argue that the region's prior prosperity followed from its founders' piety and the purity of their divinely sanctioned errand. To continue that prosperity and reestablish New England's place as the nation's beacon, he asserted, those present must continue their ancestors' affective and intellectual endeavors. To conclude, I will summarize the previous chapters, discuss this project's implications and limitations and suggest potential avenues of continued research.

Summary

In the preceding chapters I have explicated Webster's first two major epideictic orations in an attempt to gain a better understanding of how he was able to construct a conservative and reassuring public memory of America's origins. Despite

their ability to limit human agency, his use of natural place and archetypal light-dark metaphors resonate with the era's "old school" Presbyterian thought allowing him to reaffirm the status quo and reestablish New England's place as the nation's moral and philosophical epicenter by substituting intellectual and affective effort for more immediate physical action. Further, the work brings to light the ability of archetypal metaphor to contribute to the ritual and rhetoric of public memory. The archetypes' salience and their ability to transcend time, space, and culture, makes them ideally suited when a speaker wishes to articulate those foundational ideas and values upon which public memory is constructed.

I have argued in chapter two that the scholarship examining place and public memory, combined with Osborn's works on the light-dark archetypal metaphor offer unique tools with which to examine Webster's commemorative oratory. As the celebratory speechmaking of the day was often intended to shape values and become means for decision-making (Smith 2005, 10) these texts must be considered as more than simple eulogies or exaltations. The arguments within had as much potential to enact societal change as those made in courtrooms and congressional halls; much public action and reaction occurred around such addresses. However, Webster's use of the light-dark family of metaphors, with their ability to cultivate a sense of determinism or inevitability seems to reduce if not eliminate the sense of human agency such an address seeks to create. But his ability to privilege natural place metaphors and leverage the stark contrasts embodied in the light-dark family of archetypal metaphors allowed him to first construct a conservative and reassuring

public memory of America's origins that achieved his goals and second substitute feeling and thinking for more bold and immediate action without making such a limited view of human agency unappealing.

Chapter three explicates Webster's use of both natural place and light dark metaphors in his 1820 Plymouth address. While constructing a public memory that elevates Plymouth to the nation's moral center, he challenges his audience to continue the pious works of their ancestors and oppose the institution of slavery. The argument he crafts strategically juxtaposes the old and unnatural (militarism, oppression, slavery, stagnation) with the new and natural (liberty, democracy, freedom, and improvement) to highlight the contrasts between the old European sectarianism and new and preferred American nationalism.

Similarly, chapter four analyzed Webster's 1825 Bunker Hill oration, the first of two speeches given at the site, again with an eye to his use of light-dark contrast and references to nature and place. I argue that Webster strategically contrasts the bright, natural, and divinely sanctioned American experiment with a dark and militaristic Europe while recounting the illustrious and inevitable American coming of age from the earliest days of Columbus' discovery through its Revolutionary victory. Doing so allows him to proclaim Boston as the nation's moral center and as the realization of Winthrop's shining city vision.

Implications

Four implications emerge from this explication of two of Webster's early epideictic works with an eye to his use of natural and archetypal light-dark metaphors. First, it explains how rhetors may transform one potential liability inherent in the light-dark metaphor structure into a strength. Second, it reminds us of the value of studying epideictic rhetoric as a source of political attitudes. Third, it begins to revitalize interest in Daniel Webster beyond the limited rhetorical studies and more common exploration of his controversial sense of professional ethics. Finally, it adds to the growing body of rhetorical work concerned with 19th-century rhetoric.

Perhaps most importantly, this project contributes to scholarship on the light-dark family of archetypal metaphor by explaining how a potentially limiting strategy may be used as a powerful strategic tool. If taken at face value the sense of inevitability and determinism fostered by the light cycle and its associated images appears disempowering as it severely limits human agency. However, when viewed through the socio-cultural lens of the early and mid 1800's, it becomes a viable way to work within the period's pervasive sense of providential progress. By casting the public memory he was attempting to create as the light foil to a dark alternative, Webster could simultaneously claim that New England's enduring moral and philosophical purity were proof that it was always intended to be the nation's anchor and invite the audience to participate in its perpetuation by continuing their ancestors'

piety. Now, rather than taking bold action to help reaffirm the memory, those present simply had to think and feel.

Additionally, this project reminds us that we need not confine ourselves to deliberative and forensic rhetoric as sources of information about political attitudes of a people, place, or time. Although we might see ceremonial remarks as excessive verbal “fill” in the modern era of the sound bite, they often maintained their place in the foreground of public culture long after they were uttered. As is especially true in colonial and revolutionary America, public commemorations enjoyed a robust following. Citizens would assemble regularly for hours of ceremonial speechmaking and regional publications would disseminate incomplete texts and opinions of the events to an even wider audience after the fact. Passages of the more popular orations would often make their way into schoolbooks to serve as memorization exercises and mini history lessons (Mills 1943, Browne 1993, Remini 1997) and many enjoyed second lives as pamphlets published in several languages throughout the world. Additional attention to these epideictic works, artifacts of the era’s public culture, will provide a better understanding of political attitudes.

More broadly, as the interest in Webster’s epideictic work seems to have waned, the remaining two implications of this work extend beyond its contributions detailed above. First, by reassessing the value of two of his more well known epideictic addresses by examining his strategic use of a specific family of metaphors, this work heeds the calls issued by Browne (1997), Smith (1999) and others who advocated additional systematic examination of his ceremonial work. Second, the

work contributes to the robust line of inquiry into 19th-century oratory by blending historical and rhetorical analyses, suggesting how the rhetorical strategies Webster chose permitted him to work successfully within the specific constraints of the time period.

Limitations and Extensions

There are several limitations to the conclusions and implications that this study presents. First, its examination is confined to two addresses among many given by Webster throughout his prolific career. As an orator who got his start with small, local Fourth of July addresses, his oratorical bibliography is extensive. In addition to his myriad deliberative and forensic orations, some of his other well-known epideictic orations include the 1826 eulogy of Adams and Jefferson, 1832 centennial oration on The Character of Washington, 1843 address at the Completion of the Bunker Hill Monument, and a flurry of introductory and after-dinner remarks throughout New England. However, by confining the present analysis to two specific texts authored in response to New England's fading reputation, the study is able to focus sharply on the specific strategies Webster employs to create powerful and enduring public memories. Future research could widen the scope to include other place-inspired addresses, such as the second Bunker Hill oration and his early Fourth of July speeches with an eye to the memories created in response to the setting.

Second, by confining the scope of the work to two addresses delivered within a five-year span, one only achieves a "snapshot" of the potential strategic arsenal

available, further constrained by the exact socio-cultural forces it seeks to address. Understanding how Webster leveraged the era's sense of providential progress in New England to overcome the metaphors' ability to limit agency in this single situation by no means indicates how he would navigate the metaphors' pitfalls at another time or place. Nor does it indicate if or how he would navigate another time and place with those specific metaphors. But limited snapshots when acknowledged as just that are valuable artifacts because each one affords a closer look into a larger picture, which is especially true given the fame of both Webster and his orations. And when examined en masse such a series of related glimpses can provide a richly textured vision of a particular culture, era, or worldview, an index of a particular portion of public culture. Future studies could encompass works spanning a greater period of time or delivered to a wider geographical area with an eye to which strategies endured and which were isolated responses to specific exigencies.

Third, by focusing solely on Webster's use of the light-dark family of archetypal metaphor only, the work ignores the vast array of other natural-inspired metaphors present in the works. Both the Plymouth and Bunker Hill addresses are replete with references to water, earth, blood, flesh, and wind. Future projects could focus on identifying patterns to his strategic use of the entire spectrum of archetypal metaphors in one or both addresses or across several. Such an exploration may provide additional insight into the values and themes that resonate with audiences of the era.

Further, by narrowing the scope of inquiry solely to his use of metaphors, this work does not explore the many and varied aesthetic strategies employed throughout the addresses. Such a limitation overlooks the variety of other devices that Webster chose to include and therefore provides only a partial picture of how the speeches invite limited agency and craft a conservative public memory. Subsequent projects focusing on these addresses or others with an eye to the entire range of rhetorical devices utilized would provide a more complete view of Webster's strategic arsenal and perhaps reveal any tensions that may exist in the brand of public memory that he advocates.

Additionally this project provides only limited insight into a rhetor's strategic response to socio-cultural constraints by confining itself to the speeches of one man. At both the 1820 and 1825 ceremonies, Webster was one of several speakers on the program. Was he the only one to take the podium and couch his remarks in natural and light-dark metaphors? Did he work within the "old school" Presbyterian notions while others pushed the boundaries? The present investigation does not answer such questions, but future projects most certainly could and should, as the answers would enhance our understanding of the events, the speakers, the time period, and our nation's history. Further, such an investigation would enhance our understanding of the rhetorical construction of culture both in the past and in the present as well as of the strategic use of language in the construction of public memory.

A sixth limitation of this current project is the inability to capture Webster's real-time utterances. Despite a virtual blizzard of printed texts, true verbatim

transcripts are difficult to acquire. Although his works were always heavily researched and polished, Webster would critique and edit the work after the fact. Always hoping to refine his public image and enhance his political prospects he would painstakingly re-write orations before they were printed versions of to both meet his standards for “ideal” orations and give the works a better chance for a second life as pamphlets. Using a transcript of Webster’s spoken address for analysis is difficult, as he vowed to “write over everything” (F. Webster 1857 2: 413) that he had not already revised as he prepared his compiled work. Therefore, I have selected the texts I believe provide the most insight into the oratorical “monument” to public memory that he attempted to design. Not unlike the sculptor’s ability to refine his sketch of the Bunker Hill monument as he carved, Webster too was able to smooth, refine, and amplify the memory he sought to create through after-delivery and pre-press revision. To best approximate Webster’s sentiments as he has deliberately refined them, I have compared versions from highly regarded sources and choose those texts that remain consistent from publication to publication. Should verifiable transcriptions of Webster’s exact addresses become available, future studies could compare the utterances with the “amplified” printed texts. The variances and nuances within would provide a glimpse into Webster’s understanding of audience adaptation as well as highlight the differences between his written and oral styles.

Conclusion

The public memories Daniel Webster helped craft at both Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill in a time when New England's fate was all but assured are alive and well today, evidenced by both locations' continued tourist traffic. But one cannot say the same of interest in the orator himself. However, whether he is viewed as America's Demosthenes or a drunken womanizer willing to pander his oratorical prowess to support his various habits, his eloquence is almost universally undeniable.

This examination of Webster's use of place-inspired natural and archetypal light-dark family metaphors in the 1820 Plymouth and 1825 Bunker Hill orations addresses what I conceive to be two academic slights. First, it attempts to revive the generally flagging interest in the words of one of America's greatest orators. Second, it resists the tendency that I have identified among those who do mention Webster to approach his work from primarily historical and descriptive vantage-points by offering a detailed rhetorical analysis set within its historical context. It is also a mere beginning to what I envision as a larger and more exhaustive explication of his epideictic speeches focusing on identifying and explaining the fascinating patterns of metaphors he constructs.

Works Cited

- Bartlett, Irving H. "Daniel Webster as a Symbolic Hero." *The New England Quarterly* 45 (1972): 484-507.
- _____. *Daniel Webster*. New York: Norton, 1978.
- Black, Edwin. "The Sentimental Style as Escapism, or, The Devil With Dan'l Webster." *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*. Eds. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson. Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978.
- Bozeman, Theodore D. "Inductive and Deductive Politics: Science and Society in Antebellum Presbyterian Thought." *Journal of American History* 64 (1977): 704-722.
- Browne, Stephen H. "Reading Public Memory in Daniel Webster's Plymouth Rock Oration." *Western Journal of Communication* 57 (1993): 464-477.
- _____. "Webster's Eulogy and the Tropes of Public Memory." *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. Ed. Thomas W. Benson. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1997.
- Casey, Edward S. "Public Memory in Place and Time." *Framing Public Memory*. Ed. Kendall R. Phillips. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2004.
- Cray, Jr., Robert E. "Bunker Hill Refought: Memory Wars and Partisan Conflicts, 1775-1825." *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 29 (2001): 22-52.
- Curtis, George Ticknor. *Life of Daniel Webster*. New York: Appleton, 1870.
- Erickson, Paul D. "Daniel Webster's Myth of the Pilgrims." *New England Quarterly* 57 (1984): 44-64.
- Farrell, James M. "The Speech Within: Trope and Performance in Daniel Webster's Eulogy to Adams and Jefferson." *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. Ed. Thomas W. Benson. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1997.
- Fields, Wayne. "The Reply to Hayne: Daniel Webster and the Rhetoric of Stewardship." *Political Theory* 11 (1983): 5-28.

- Hariman, Robert. Afterword. "Relocating the Art of Public Address." *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. Ed. Thomas W. Benson. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1997.
- Lewis, Walker, ed. *Speak for Yourself, Daniel: A Life of Webster in His Own Words*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1969.
- Matteson, John T. "Grave Discussions: The Image of the Sepulchre in Webster, Emerson, and Melville." *The New England Quarterly* 47 (2001): 419-446.
- Mills, Glen E. "Misconceptions Concerning Daniel Webster." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 29 (1943): 423-428.
- Nathans, Sydney. "Daniel Webster, Massachusetts Man." *New England Quarterly* 39 (1966): 161-181.
- Osborne, Michael M. and Douglas Ehninger. "The Metaphor in Public Address." *Speech Monographs* 29 (1962): 223-234.
- Osborne, Michael. "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 (1967): 115-126.
- _____. "The Evolution of the Archetypal Sea In Rhetoric and Poetic." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63 (1977): 347-363.
- Parish, John R. "Webster, New England, and the West." *Journal of American History* 54 (1967): 524-549.
- Peterson, Merrill D. *The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay, and Calhoun*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Purcell, Sarah J. *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002.
- Reid, Ronald F. and James F. Klumpp. *American Rhetorical Discourse*. 3rd ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2005.
- Remini, Robert V. *Daniel Webster: The Man and His Time*. New York: Norton, 1997.
- Seelye, John. *Memory's Nation: The Place of Plymouth Rock*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

- Smith, Craig R. "Daniel Webster (1782-1852), Defender of the Union." *American Orators Before 1900: Critical Studies and Sources*. Eds. Bernard K. Duffy and Halford R. Ryan. New York: Greenwood Press, 1987.
- _____. *Defender of the Union: the Oratory of Daniel Webster*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.
- _____. "The Anti-War Rhetoric of Daniel Webster." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 85 (1999): 1-16.
- _____. *Daniel Webster and the Oratory of Civil Religion*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2005.
- Szasz, Ferenc, M. "Daniel Webster: Architect of America's Civil Religion." *Historic New Hampshire* 34 (1979): 223-243.
- Thelan, David. "Memory and American History," *Journal of American History* 75 (1989): 1117-1129.
- Vasaly, Ann. *Representations: Images of the World in Ciceronian Oratory*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Vivian, Bradford. "'A Timeless Now': Memory and Repetition." *Framing Public Memory*. Ed. Kendall R. Phillips. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2004.
- Webster, Daniel. *An Oration Pronounced at Hanover*. Hanover, MA: Moses Davis, 1800.
- _____. *A Funeral Oration Occasioned by the Death of Ephiraim Simonds*. Hanover, MA: Moses Davis, 1801.
- _____. *An Oration Delivered at Fryeburg, Maine*. Boston: A. Williams and Company, 1802.
- _____. *Oration Delivered at Concord*. Concord, MA: George Hough, 1806.
- _____. *Address Delivered Before the Washington Benevolent Society at Portsmouth, N.H.* Portsmouth, NH: Oracle Press, 1812.
- _____. *Defense of the Kennistons*. Boston: Joseph T. Buckingham, 1817.
- _____. *First Settlement of New England*. Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1821.

- _____. *Dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument*. Boston: Cummings, Hilliard, and Company, 1825.
- _____. *Tariff: Speech and Remarks in Senate*. Boston: Boston Daily Advertiser Press, 1828.
- _____. *Bank of the United States: Speech in Senate*. Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1832a.
- _____. *The Character of Washington*. Washington, D.C.: Jonathan Elliot, 1832b.
- _____. *The Life, Eulogy, and Great Orations of Daniel Webster*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1853a.
- _____. *The Works of Daniel Webster*. Vol. 1. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1853b.
- Webster, Fletcher ed. *The Private Correspondence of Daniel Webster*. Vol. 2. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1857.
- Willison, George F. *The Pilgrim Reader: The Story of the Pilgrims as Told by Themselves and Their Contemporaries Friendly and Unfriendly*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1953.
- Wiltse, Charles and Alan R. Berolzheimer, eds. *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Speeches and Formal Writings*. Vol. 1. Hanover, NH: The University Press of New England, 1986.
- Wiltse, Charles M. and Harold D. Moser, eds. *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Correspondence*. Vol. 2. 1825-1829. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1976.
- Winthrop, John. "A Model of Christian Charity." *American Rhetorical Discourse*. 3rd ed. Eds. Ronald F. Reid and James F. Klumpp. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2005.