Prison Area, Independence Valley

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Published by Dartmouth College Press

Kroes, Rob. 
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NOTES

Introduction


4. Runaway Train is a 1985 American film, directed by Andrei Konchalovsky. The screenplay by Djordje Milicevic, Paul Zindel, and Edward Bunker was based on an original screenplay by Akira Kurosawa with uncredited contributions by frequent Kurosawa collaborators Hideo Oguni and Ryuzo Kikushima. It stars Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, Rebecca De Mornay and John P. Ryan. © 1985 Cannon Films, Inc.


Chapter 1. The George W. Bush Administration and European Anti-Americanism

This text originates in my retirement address delivered at the University of Amsterdam. It captures the sense of alienation of a European Americanist at the time of the George W. Bush administration. The original version was published by the Journal of American History 93, no. 2 (September 2006): 417–32. It was entitled “European Anti-Americanism: What’s New?”


8. The words “agonizing reappraisal” were used by John Foster Dulles on December 14, 1953, when he said in Paris that if the French Assembly did not approve the European Defense Community treaty, “that would compel an agonizing reappraisal” of basic U.S. foreign policy toward France.


13. Ibid., 10.

14. See, for example, the chapter “America and the World as America,” in Ziauddin Sardar and Merryl Wyn Davies, Why Do People Hate America? (Cambridge: ICON Books, 2002). Similar best-selling indictments, in languages other than English, of America’s recent course in world politics and the failure of the American press to take an independent and critical position are, for example, Hans Leyendecker, Die Lügen des Weissen Hauses: Warum Amerika einen Neuanfang braucht [The Lies of the White House: Why America Needs a New Start] (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004); Karel van Wolferen, De ondergang van een wereldorde [The Demise of a World Order] (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact, 2003); and Denise Artaud, L’Amérique des néoconservateurs: L’Empire a-t-il un avenir? [The America of the Neo-Conservatives: Has the Empire a Future?] (Paris: Editions Ellipses, 2004).


18. I may refer the reader to my survey of such French views of American modernity. See Kroes, Them and Us, ch. 9.


20. See Kroes, If You’ve Seen One, You’ve Seen the Mall.


22. Quoted in ibid., 62.


25. I am paraphrasing the comic Rob Corddry on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart: “It’s our principles that matter, our inspiring, abstract notions. Remember: Just because torturing prisoners is something we did, [that] doesn’t mean it’s something we would do.” Quoted by Mark Danner in his “The Logic of Torture,” New York Review of Books 51, 11 (June 24, 2004): 74.


27. J. Habermas, Der gespaltete Westen (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2004). The quotation is from the interview in the Süddeutsche Zeitung.
Chapter 2. The Ascent of the Falling Man: An Iconic Image of 9/11

This piece has evolved from passages in my Photographic Memories: Private Pictures, Public Images, and American History (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2007). Ever since I have been trying to translate into language my continuing fascination with one particular image among the flood of visual material produced by 9/11. The piece has benefited greatly from critical comments by colleagues and friends, in particular Geoffrey Batchen, Kate Delaney, Mick Gidley, Jay Prosser, Derek Rubin, Robert Rydell, and Jaap Verheul.


3. Ibid., 30.

4. In a piece tellingly titled “Still Life,” Laura Frost addresses the issue of, as her subtitle has it, “9/11’s Falling Bodies.” She recognizes photography’s inherent power to make time stand still, a power that inspired Polish poet Wislawa Szymrfska. See Laura Frost, “Still Life: 9/11’s Falling Bodies,” in Ann Keniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn, eds., Literature after 9/11 (London: Routledge, 2008), 180–207.


7. Ibid., 221–22.

8. The firefighter is shown in the documentary film 9/11, produced by Jules and Gédéon Naudet, two French documentary filmmakers who happened to be in New York making a film about one rookie firefighter who underwent his fire baptism on the day of 9/11. The film contains gripping footage from inside one of the burning towers, but likewise makes a stated conscious choice not to show the falling bodies. Instead, one hears the thud of their hitting the ground. 9/11, A Film by Jules and Gédéon Naudet and James Hanlon (Goldfish Pictures, Inc., 2001).

Notes to Chapter 3

19. “Postmemory” is a term suggested by Marianne Hirsch in her *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). It describes the sort of memory that people form of past events they have not directly witnessed.


Works Cited
Barlow, Joel. An oration: delivered at the North Church in Hartford, at the meeting of the Connecticut Society of the Cincinnati, July 4,
1787. In commemoration of the independence of the United States (Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1787).


Puya, feat. Connect-r. “My Americandrim.” Dir. Marian Crisan. Roma-


3. In my If You’ve Seen One, You’ve Seen the Mall: Europeans and American Mass Culture (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), I give many examples for a range of European countries, for the post–World War I period, particularly chapters 1 and 3.

4. It is interesting to contrast this music video with one produced more recently in Romania, by singer Puya, featuring Connect-r, called “American-drim” (American Dream). Against the backdrop of contemporary Romania, presented as a landscape of broken dreams with its democratic promise unfulfilled, the singer conjures up one tempting element after another of an imaginary America, as it feeds his dreams of “losing his identity, becoming an American.” Clearly, in different parts of contemporary Europe, America still plays a number of roles, from tempting model to baneful force of alienation and dehumanization.


6. For “empire of liberty,” see Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrick-
son, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). The words “empire of reason” are from a statement in an oration on July 4, 1787, by Joel Barlow at Hartford, Connecticut, in celebration of the anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence: “The present is an age of philosophy, and America the empire of reason. Here, neither the pageantry of courts, nor the glooms of superstition, have dazzled or beclouded the mind. Our duty calls us to act worthy of the age and the country that gave us birth. Though inexperience may have betrayed us into errors—yet they have not been fatal: and our own discernment will point us to their proper remedy.”


*Chapter 4. Musical America: Staging the U.S.A. to the Sounds of Music*

1. Thus, the February 1, 1893, *New York Times*, under the heading “Henry Smith Lynching Victim,” reported: “Another Negro burned; Henry Smith dies at the stake” before going into gruesome detail.
Notes to Chapter 5


7. See http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9B05E3DF103FEE3BBC4D52DFB366838D629EDE.

8. See www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b03fvdsg/Arena_Arena_The_National_Theatre_Part_Two_War_and_Peace/.


10. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXuffvjs_Ps (song and lyrics by Fermin Muguruza).

11. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFKa_gaFMlQ (song and lyrics by Puya and Connect-R).

Chapter 5. A Spaghetti Southern: Landscapes of Fear in Quentin Tarantino’s Django Unchained


8. I purposefully use Joseph Conrad’s metaphor of the heart of darkness. In fact, like Conrad, Tarantino uses a narrative trope that has much older roots. Like precursors from classical antiquity, such as Odysseus or Orpheus descending into Hades—a trope known as “katabasis,” or “Nekuia”—often with the point of retrieving loved ones, Django has set out on a similar mission.


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.


Chapter 6. Freaks on Display: A Tale of Empathy and Ostracism


2. The album cover for Diamond Dogs was designed by Belgian artist Guy Peellaert. Compare Ian Buruma, “The Invention of David Bowie,” New


5. See www.westland.net/coneyisland/articles/freaks.htm.

6. Such structural containment and separation within the setting of an optical regime was in line with contemporary trends in the building of prisons and animal zoos. Compare Michel Foucault, Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la Prison (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).


10. Turning Victor Hugo’s novel into a film brought a number of problems, one of which was to adapt for a visual medium like film a story whose focus was on the inner life of a character behind a mask, incapable of expressing inner emotions. On this problem, see Mireille Gamel, “L’homme qui rit à l’écran: Du bon usage de l’infidélité,” http://groupugo.div.jussieu.fr/groupugo/03-04-26gamel.htm.

One enduring echo of Paul Leni’s film adaptation in American mass culture is the face of the Joker in the Batman series of comic books, styled after Conrad Veidt’s makeup.


17. If Browning’s film can be seen as an invitation to conceive of freaks as fellow human beings, the last part of its narrative seems to undermine this message. In the terrible revenge meted out to Cleo, the freaks seem to confirm the classic view of them as threatening and scary creatures. For an enlightening reading of inner contradictions in the film’s story, see Joan Hawkins, “‘One of Us’: Tod Browning’s Freaks,” in Rosemary Garland Thompson, ed., Freakery: Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 265–76.


19. For a grisly collection of such photographs, see James Allen et al., Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America (Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms Publishers, 2000).

20. The photograph is available on http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/gutenberg/holitsch/amerikah/bilder/s367.jpg.


23. Wood, Lynching and Spectacle, 238.


Chapter 7. American Responses to the Holocaust: Atrocity Photographs as Nomadic Objects

1. Never mind that upon closer scrutiny the boy most likely squinted his eyes against the sun, which, judging by the shadow his small body casts, the boy was facing. He must have been looking at the photographer.


11. Frédéric Rousseau discusses this initial Israeli reluctance in his *L’enfant juif de Varsovie*, 124ff.


15. The work is presented on the following website: www.dottycommies.com/holocaust10.html. The artist, Alan Schechner, served in the Israeli army from 1981 to 1983 with active duty both in the Occupied Territories and Lebanon. The work described here is both a “stand alone” project in itself, and also used in “Dialog,” a collaboration between Schechner and Palestinian artist Rana Bishara.

Chapter 8. Barack Hussein Obama: Two Portrait Sketches


4. Letter to Horace Greeley, August 22, 1862.


10. See www.scribd.com/doc/4107132/Barack-Obama-on-Homeland-Security. This is an electoral campaign document, summarizing Obama’s views of the Homeland Security counterterrorism apparatus and strategy. It contains telling policy projects that today, in the eyes of critics, seem to
be honored in the breach. Among the promises made we find the following: “Obama also would restore habeas corpus so that those who pose a danger are swiftly tried and brought to justice and those who do not have sufficient due process to ensure that we are not wrongfully denying them their liberty.”


13. The CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll was conducted July 16–21, 2011, with 1,018 adult Americans questioned by telephone. The survey’s overall sampling error is plus or minus three percentage points.

14. “We believe that the best of America is in these small towns that we get to visit, and in these wonderful little pockets of what I call the real America.” Greensboro, NC, October 16, 2008, http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2008/10/to-avoid-being-depressed-palin.html?hpid=topnews.


17. See Kloppenberg, Reading Obama. For a similar, article-length argument, see Schulten, “Barack Obama, Abraham Lincoln, and John Dewey.”


Chapter 9. Obama and the Paradox of American Global Power: Dreams of Democracy and the Imperial Imperative


5. To get to this linguistic stretch President Obama had had to overrule the lawyers in the Justice and Defense departments and turn to more pliant ones in the White House and State Department. Bruce Ackerman, a professor of law and political science at Yale, said in the *New York Times* that this could open the way for “even more blatant acts of presidential war-making in the decades ahead”; see “Legal Acrobatics, Illegal War,” www.nytimes.com/2011/06/21/opinion/21Ackerman.html.

6. Following a sustained public outcry, culminating in a public letter over the signature of more than 250 top legal scholars, including Laurence Tribe, a Harvard professor who had taught Obama constitutional law, and published in the *New York Review of Books*, Manning was transferred to a more normal detention regime; see *New York Review of Books* 58, 5 (May 12–25, 2011): 62.


10. Colin Powell’s words of praise and endorsement can still be heard on the Internet: www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_NMZv6Vf8. It is an excerpt from NBC’s *Meet the Press*, October 19, 2008.


15. See http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/fpccga.


18. In an interview on CNN, Wednesday, September 5, 2012, Obama himself briefly went into the criteria used in drone warfare. Obama told CNN that a terror suspect had to pass five tests before the administration would allow him to be taken out by a drone. “Drones are one tool that we use, and our criteria for using them is very tight and very strict,” the president said.

  1. “It has to be a target that is authorized by our laws.”
  2. “It has to be a threat that is serious and not speculative.”
  3. “It has to be a situation in which we can’t capture the individual before they move forward on some sort of operational plot against the United States.”
  4. “We’ve got to make sure that in whatever operations we conduct, we are very careful about avoiding civilian casualties.”
  5. “That while there is a legal justification for us to try and stop [American citizens] from carrying out plots . . . they are subject to the protections of the Constitution and due process.”

For a brief discussion of these points see www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/09/obama-drone/


21. Ibid., 219.


*Chapter 10. Taking Exception*


7. Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); David Thelen, *The Nation and Beyond*, a special issue of *The Journal of American History* 86, 3 (December 1999). I had the good fortune to be involved in both projects.

