

Mount Bushmore

"Tho' obscur'd, this is the form of the Angelic Land"
William Blake ("America")



*"...It was in the theater that the Greek citizen saw himself and obeyed the Delphic maxim:
Know Thyself. Best of all, in the comedies...he learned to see himself, wryly,
as others saw him, chastened by their painful laughter..."*



*"...And in the tragedies he beheld, in the larger figures of heroes and gods,
beckoning potential selves whose imitation in moments of crisis
would help him overpass the mediocrity of the safe and the habitual"*

Lewis Mumford ("The City in History")

Rumsfeld meets Perle, Wolfowitz and Cheney in a country club to wait for Bush who's coming to ask for their feedback on a plan he thought of after the self confidence his re-election gave him: He wants to confront on TV Noam Chomsky, live and on nationwide broadcast. They all know that the reason they have chosen Bush as their front is that, as young men, they had been inspired by Mark Twain's line "If you want to rule address the idiots; they're a majority" and they thought that by making him a president the majority would consider that they either had a chance of becoming successes too or that they were paid a flattering compliment by having somebody like them in the White House; the gang also considers he has a rapport with that majority and a perfect body language for communicating with it and to make his body language more convincing they don't tell him all facts so that he, at least half, believes the lies he says on TV. Before he arrives they discuss the ways they could exploit all possible outcomes of Bush's encounter with Chomsky. Another issue on the agenda is what Rumsfeld's people have caught on their bugs about an American tycoon who, influenced by an American megathinker's presentation of European "Greenbelt Towns", went to one of them and from there, as a DJ, he has launched terribly sarcastic, and also influential, attacks on Bush and their gang. They turn Bush's attention and their experiment, from Chomsky to this DJ and give him a briefing and a brainstorming on how to handle the whole thing, but during the projection of photographic material accompanying either the poetry and music or the sarcasm presented by the DJ, Bush falls asleep and many things he hears he just learns through his unconscious or through what he dreams, or half-asleep-half-awake hallucinates, about them; e.g. he hears either Rumsfeld or the DJ reading Allende's last speech, goodbye-ing and thanking the people of Chile, before, as a photo shows, he wore a helmet and took a gun and with his guards went out of the building where they were bombed, and half asleep he contrasts his own helmet wearing day of "mission accomplished" that feels to him as if he were a mosquito-size pilot in the plane that bombed Allende and at which Allende was looking in his photo; also he discovers a latent talent for paraphrasing songs even during his sleep when, half through his alcohol deprivation syndrome and half through getting drunk (after a very vehement piece of the DJ's recorded sarcasm) he dreams half-awake and half asleep that all three Gods, Christian, Jewish and Muslim, sing to him a license to drink in the melody of a song promising abstention from drink, to encourage him abstain from killing (also he paraphrases Lennon's "Working class hero" into a complete "Ruling class hero"). Among other things, Rumsfeld also presents the DJ's presentation of "The liberators" from Neruda's "Canto General" and its translation; then Bush leaves to go get prepared for their flight to Europe and the gang, led by Perle, dances (to the tarantella steps of Nicholson's batmanian Joker when with his gang he was destroying exhibits of the museum of Gotham City, but without also hearing the translation) Neruda's song on that Genesis in which Jehovah distributed the world to United fruit, Coca Cola, Anaconda etc and established "buffoon operas" and dictatorships run by shit-flies addicted to shit, blood and marmalade and made the resources of Latin America disappear as if through magicians on ships looking like serving-trays. They fly for the weekend to Europe (carrying their own food and toilets for fear of also having their DNA abducted through abducting their excrement) and enter the DJ's house (already checked and surrounded by guards) at the time he is DJ-ing the same song, and before they hear the part after their arrival (concerning a collapsed Indian who is to United fruit another piece of dead fruit fit for the dustbin) the gang also hear the translation of the allegro tunes to which they danced and with which they identified (i.e. with a gang of shit-flies and buffoons). In the course of Bush's discussion with the DJ and his wife (and his kid daughter) about subjects ranging from Rocky 2, to Pinter's Nobel lecture, to Neruda, to Theodorakis, to conscientious objectors, to Frayn's play "Copenhagen" and Heisenberg, Einstein, and Feynman, to Lewis Mumford (the American megathinker), to creationism versus evolutionism in US, and many other things and persons, we also learn that this DJ just has the same name with the tycoon and through something almost accidental they took him for the tycoon and exaggerated his potential influence, otherwise they might have never gone there anyway. In the course of the presentation Bush proves to be a very alert, noticing, intelligent and sensitive person, with also a great sense of humor, something that confirms the suspicions that the mental and ethical numbness usually associated with him was a result of stimuli, discussion and, generally, input fed to him, and to all American people who voted for him, by the gang and the media they control. The gang, with the exception of Rumsfeld, remains mute in the discussion, only caring to see if anything can attract any amount of attention from public opinion or make its way to it through, or rather despite, the media. Rumsfeld is mute only in the beginning, but as slides start to be projected, by the DJ's wife who does most of the talking, he suffers the same falls and lapses to sleep that Bush was suffering in the country club and during them he dreams, or half-asleep-half-awake hallucinates, things related to both his individual unconscious and US's collective conscious and unconscious, his individual surfacing unconscious mainly relating to his superego behind his usual

superego Al Capone, namely Nietzsche himself, who in Rumsfeld's lapses very poignantly ridicules his daring to have the impression that he and neocons are Nietzscheans (his Nietzsche also says that the reason he doesn't read Yalom to see what he thinks was supposedly the reason he (Nietzsche) wept is that the main reason he weeps for is that the kind of following he finally attracted were people like Rumsfeld and the neocons (and Gordon Liddy of the Watergate times) while the people who really attracted his own admiration and esteem were some tens of thousands of conscientious objectors, among them Theodorakis (who in US is only known for his Zorba music, not for his activism, nor for his music for Neruda's Canto General) who had some tribulations quite like the ones of his own (Nietzsche's) superego, i.e. Spartacus). Then, not in order to make Bush have secrets from the gang, but just in order to relax more intimately with him and his wife while listening better to Neruda-Theodorakis, the DJ gets rid of the presence of the gang by reciting a poem that not only is insulting to them but also is, in recitation and not in sung form, able to mislead them into thinking that it would only attract the attention of culture freaks and not of voting or demonstrating masses, and the gang, biting the bait, ridicule the hope that such poems might make a difference and walk out on him, Perle among them saying that "they saw the white of his eye". In late hours all three of them see very deeply into the Canto and its music and prepare next day's DJ-ing but they all cannot understand to what exactly optical image (or videoclip-like thing) a song about birds and a song about "America my love" is a soundtrack after a certain turn of its melody and verses. Finally they part for the night after giving Bush an envelope for bedtime reading or homework. Next morning, Bush sings to the gang a little of the poem that the DJ had only recited and they, fearing again something in the sung form might appeal to the public opinion, do come to watch the long Sunday night DJ-ing. An agent, double as it turns out (since he is a very good friend of the DJ), whom Rumsfeld uses to keep an eye on the DJ, pissed that he was not even notified his boss was coming, plays the trick of putting bugs where Bush and the gang are sitting. During the instrumental parts of a song Bush and Rumsfeld quarrel, in whispers (like naughty students in classroom), over the issue, proposed by Bush and initially objected but finally along the quarrel consented to by Rumsfeld, of them two suing themselves so as to be tried by an International Tribunal as war criminals. The bugs transmit that and the listeners of the broadcast form a huge and enthusiastic demonstration to express their love to them and their support to their decision. They reach in front of their house with placards held high and shouted; after some bafflement Bush and Rumsfeld realize that it's not dangerous lynchers but ardent supporters that besiege them and, like Paul Newman and Robert Redford in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid", when chased by bounty killers, jumped into a waterfall but were saved, they two also, at the approach of the gang behind them, jump from a balcony into the hands of the loving crowds (Rumsfeld ends up in the hands of a group of women whose placards indicate they don't consider him a fatso but a "mucho macho") while the DJ and his wife realize that these developments were the optical image to which one of the turns of the melody, that they couldn't quite relate to anything they had seen, was a soundtrack. At one point the crowd shouts they want Bush to speak and half dazed and in tears by all this sea of love, half not remembering where he had first heard it he delivers the goodbye speech of Allende paraphrased to the specifics of our times, which the people do not consider a plagiarism, because they all have heard the original and think it's a conscious borrowing and reference and they heartily applaud the rephrasing which, besides being quite frank and revealing, is both wisely astute and genuinely passionate. Then a karaoke party starts in which Rumsfeld falls in love with Daisy-Marguerita or Daisy-Sunday or Ruby-Daisy-Tuesday or Maggie-the-moocher or Even-on-Sunday, a local erotic semigoddess and celebrity among the young. Bush and Suzy (the kindergarten daughter of Bill and Helen, the DJ-ing couple) feel deepening an, already deep at first sight, mutual enchantment they had, and go for a singing night on a lake with a boat of some passing young demonstrators and party-ers. Already during their flight back, CNN announces that Bush exposed USA by plagiarizing Allende's speech of 9/11/73 (but they don't say what either Allende or Bush said) and that USA is exposed, possibly, to danger of biological warfare since Perle's excrement for reasons not yet identified was abducted from the toilets they were carrying with them. Also the media do report that a major democrat politician says that he would like Bush to do something that was progressive in one way or another but he would prefer another, not one that brought such shame to US. Soon an elder Princeton emeritus, ex-dean (and friend of Perle, the top of the Princeton part of the gang) sues Bush for the defamation of the academic traditions of the country and until the announced next elections to be held, as soon as possible, Cheney takes over. Bush with Rumsfeld just make it in the nick of time to sue themselves as war criminals, i.e. before their critics do it to make it appear they were dragged there instead of going there themselves; they had been delayed a little because, possibly to break their alliance and friendship, possibly for other reasons, some masked persons had abducted Bush (who had no body guards anymore)

for some days and subjected him to some painful instructions Rumsfeld had suggested for use in Abu Ghraib. Also, his ex body guards, possibly upon Cheney's order and Perle's inspiration, grab him and leave him alone on mount Rushmore, over the giant heads, telling him that Laura (Laura Bush) tells him that she changed her cell phone number and not call her if she doesn't call him (because it would be against her principles (and possibly against the alienating presentation Pat Robertson, as spiritual and marriage counselor, made of it) to forgive him his lapse back to alcohol on that day in the country club where he violated his vows to quit drinking and ended up in the shameful mess he did). He seriously contemplates suicide over the Rushmore cliff, but is prevented by the awareness that this would be exploited by the low taste black humor and black plans of Perle or whoever to make him look deranged, e.g. in associating mount Rushmore and mount Golgotha, and then calling it a mount Bushmore to make him a national joke and to invalidate, as deranged raving and "adolescent ranting like Pinter's Nobel lecture" and "right for the wrong reason even if well taken" etc, his Allende-like speech, when it shows up somewhere. He is taken from there (on a glide-plane for two and then on horse back for two) by a small-made brunette whom he dimly remembers, possibly not certainly, from somewhere in the not so recent past, but more certainly and less dimly he remembers (her name is either Amanda or Amada) from the recent karaoke party where from Bill and Helen's balcony she had sung the other part of Canto General that neither he, nor his two DJ friends had figured what videoclip it would be a soundtrack to (to say that the verses and melody was soundtrack to the person singing them in a party or even a demonstration hardly is a videoclip to verses like "A marine mountain flies toward the islands, a moon of birds winging South over the fermented islands of Peru. It's a living river of shade, it's a comet of countless tiny hearts that eclipse the world's sun like a thick-tailed meteor pulsing toward the archipelago. And at the end of the enraged sea, in the ocean rain, like drops of blood and feathers, the cardinals bled the dawn of Anahuac" even if as birds one considers the enthusiastic demonstrators). Amada takes him to a camp of activists. The husband of Amada, next day, brings him there Laura, who overcame her alienation and the brainwash by their reverend through the efforts of Rumsfeld. These activists are volunteer sitting ducks in the following sense: They've heard William Blum say, in Boulder Colorado, that if a US president wanted to end terrorism in three days he would ask pardon of all nations US harmed on day 1, say Israel is not a state of US on day 2, stop arms production and with money saved pay reparations and compensations on day 3, and get assassinated on day 4. So they conceived the plan to try to have one among themselves become president, then appoint Blum as vice president and then announce the above decisions, and if the above was not just a figure of speech but a real prediction and the president gets killed Blum would become president but it would be hard for whoever to kill that president too on day 5 without causing real revolt (Of course all that they don't exactly say to Blum so as not to either alarm him about them about their risking, nor insult him about their shielding him). Amada is to be the one elected as president through the following trick: They let leak to their opponents that in a city college in her teens, she was expelled for a pornographic paraphrase of Odyssey which she had called "Homer meets Chaucer" and the opponents let leak this (but not other, later, things that would expose them). Her husband goes out to sing parts of that and, to ridicule him (and Amada), a TV presenter who is a Princeton alumnus invites him, a feminist lady and d' Alessandro for a discussion, but it all turns out so well that all TV stations of the nation connect, Amada's husband remains on stage alone and gives the floor, through phone, to Bush and to Amada and to Rumsfeld and many songs, and also Allende's paraphrase, are heard. Then Cheney and Wolfowitz (and also Perle's ex-dean) are set up for a TV meeting with people like Chomsky and Stiglitz and Akerlof and before the meetings they collapse or have accidents and quit, saying they do it because they are curious to see how many days Amada's government will last before they're called back to govern as usual. Perle flies to Europe to shoot the DJ but that double agent, in slapstick style, caps him with a bucket in which he was keeping his shit that he had abducted. As her election's celebration Amada invites people to a stadium for a rock and Canto General concert and a lunatic dressed in US flag colors shoots her, her husband, her brother-in-law and himself, while the, so far, obscure verses (about a short eclipse and cardinals bleeding the dawn) are being sung and she dies in the love sea of people who see her off and sing her favorite song she had sung from phone on that TV event:

Into my arms like a star fall tonight till you sleep there/there's no hope left in the world, hopes have left without trace/as night herself now embroiders your body with kisses/pain is no measure, don't leave our treasure be lost out in space/If I can't make it to your dream/then try to make it to mine/I'll wait to hear you come whistling a streetsong like always/like every summer when starlight is brighter to dress in light's shine.



The story, despite its tragic ending, was a comedy too. Not just for our world but in the parallel world too where Amanda and her husband and her brother-in-law were killed. But in our world it is a comedy for one additional reason, the funniest of all: Not through parodying and caricaturing the real-life originals of the characters but through the parody and caricature that the originals (Bush and gang) constitute, in real life, of their ideal selves and roles that the play ascribes to them as, potential, gifts (so for the amusement of the reader we suggest the experiment of bringing to mind, every now and then, the real faces and reflexes of the originals and wondering if they would ever be like their name-mates). Their only benefit of the doubt (its application to war criminals is optional to their onlooker!) is good old "I'm not much babe, but I'm all I got".