Review Article: The Emergence of Dominance: Historical Narrative and Time–Place Periods

PETER CLARK & SCOTT TAYLOR

Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission

Michael Adas

Introduction

The research programme of national systems of innovation was formulated more than two decades ago towards the closing moments of the Cold War. Since then the form of Cold War has been altered and America's covert political legitimacy has been narrated by, for example, de Grazia[1] and critiqued by Ferguson.[2] Moreover, narrating America's prowess in technology and design has increasingly shifted from a 'within America story' (for example Hughes's *American Genesis*[3]) to a more international narrative (e.g. Kagan's *Dangerous Nation*[4]).

Michael Adas exemplifies this tendency for counter narratives to challenge the previously dominant domestic perspective. He seeks to establish the technological imperatives of America's nation building from the founding of the nation through to the twenty-first century. Technology is defined as a cultural predisposition grounded in fundamental American ideals and myths which were embodied in two ways. First, through discipline, precision and teamwork combined with attention to efficiency, foresight, punctuality, well rehearsed parades and organizational aptitudes. This cultural predisposition was deployed as a civilizing mission that dismissed indigenous American populations and non-westerners. Secondly, the role of design is in embodying and inscribing artefacts with key performative features as an everyday occurrence. Adas contends that this civilizing mission was evident at the founding of colonies, specifically those in the North East, and has cumulated since then. He articulates this contention through a series of vignettes covering the period from the mid-nineteenth century into the present day.

Our review article of Adas' book *Dominance by Design* is in four parts. First, we present the historical narrative and the vignettes exemplifying America's national system of innovation and design. This section is detailed to enable our subsequent discussion and critique. Brief critique of certain features of the book is central to the second section. Third, we engage in an examination of the narrative approach to historical revelation and what this means for this book in the context of business history. Fourth, we suggest how the vignettes can be considered as case studies of time–place periods and the difficulties this raises for the reader and the argument. Finally we present our understanding of Adas' book and argument in the fuller context that we develop.

America's Imperial System of Innovation

First Vignette: Admiral Perry in Tokyo, 1853–54

Adas' analysis commences with a vignette situated in 1853–54 when Admiral Perry and the American fleet entered Tokyo Bay to prise open the Japanese market and to highlight their civilizing mission into the Pacific. This is a useful corrective to European expectations that the narrative would commence in the North Atlantic. Prior to the arrival of Perry the American navy had undertaken incessant surveying of Japanese waters. Perry arrives in Tokyo Bay, lands and then engages in a choreographed military display for effect—a crowd-pleasing spectacle—to display American technological prowess. His remit from Washington is to gain market and political entry, preferably by persuasion, but by force if necessary. The fleet is prepared to do battle. Adas considers that Perry is a paragon of middle-class virtue and manly fierce pride, self control and martial prowess. Perry personified the dominant values and shared the abiding commitment to enlisting technology and science. He also possessed a strong sense of superiority. The opening of Japan was regarded as a great international triumph for the USA. This vignette introduces key themes in the book: first, the separation of social complexity from technology; second, the desire to overcome nature as a barrier to trade and the 'civilizing mission' of the US; and third, the construction of authoritative historical narratives that represent the US as the key actor in innovation and commerce.

Central Argument: US Technology and Nation Building

Adas contends that technological driven enterprises transformed American society from a wilderness into a building site. Socially constructed technological imperatives provided for American expansion and sought to dominate non-western cultures. Technology is presented as a cultural predisposition grounded in fundamental American myths and ideals that coalesced in the first decades of settlement and have persisted in varying degrees of intensity until today. Technological pursuits and material achievements strongly influenced the construction of American identity as well as steam engines, and steamboats.

In the seventeenth century the new arrivals from the United Kingdom defined the New World as a boundless wilderness. The promotional literature circulating in London encouraged joint stock companies to establish commercial settlements along North America's Atlantic coast (e.g. 1609 for Virginia). The promoters presented catalogues of plants and animals which they claimed were readily

available. They elided the fact that the early settlements were dependent on seasonal shipments of provisions from England. The colonization of North America opened up promising enclaves to extend the sectors of the European mercantile capitalist system. The colonizers justified themselves as 'civilizing' the New World and they devalued the hunting, agricultural and fighting skills of the indigenous peoples.

Into Modernism: Nineteenth Century American Design and Technology

From Independence onward there was a spiritual shift from divine mandate to natural law. The dimension of expansion assumed heroic proportions. Americans recorded the landscape as a means of enrolling and extracting seemingly boundless natural resources. Lumbering and sawmilling were central to development. The plentiful supply of hard and soft wood was used to build balloon frame houses, textile machines and to burn. Innovations included more efficient forms of watermills, the axe and steam engines as mechanized donkeys.

This narrative tells us that by 1850 America was competitive with Europe. There were significant salients, especially in the development of engineering workshops and capacities in model building to create prototypes. These underpinned the world's first agribusiness enabled by machine makers like Deere and McCormack. The development of canals and then railroads had a huge impact on migration, settlement and resource extraction. It also enabled destruction of the buffalo as a strategy for undermining the economy of the Indian population. After the 1860s there was the extensive use of photography to support exploration. In the 1880s the US became the first nation in which 50% of the population were able to feed the rest. After the Civil War a massive increase in inventions and scientific breakthroughs enabled industrialization through increasingly complex, interconnected and interactive systems (e.g. cigarette-making machines). Electrification was soon deployed to support production and as a commercial innovation in city living. Major demographic shifts across the American continent were enabled. There was dispersal and connectedness (e.g. the telegraph). The landscapes of cities were transformed and became quite distinctive from European cities (e.g. Paris). After 1880 Sullivan and steel frame buildings transformed Chicago and skyscrapers with elevators were possible by the end of the century. There was a craze for physical culture that promoted the provision of parks and stadia.

The Centrality of Professional Engineers

Adas argues that engineers made a pivotal contribution whilst raising their own status and remuneration. Professional engineers constructed the infrastructure of canals and railways in the US and then designed industrial technology and work organization. Engineers transformed esoteric knowledge into pragmatic, provisional knowledge and became cultural heroes. American literature depicts engineers as active and authoritative.

Professional engineers also played a key role in American expansion overseas. American and European approaches to colonialism differed in significant ways. Adas introduces a vignette on the Philippine venture as a vast engineering project by engineer supervisors and contrasts their role with the British colonial administrator. The American colonizers set out to remake the Philippine Islands to accord

with American models and ideals. This is explained as benevolent assimilation. Americans assumed that Filipinos ought to adopt the colonizer's institutions, material culture and ways of life. Their ethos defined the mission, set goals and parameters, esprit and a 'can-do' predisposition. The American colonial engineers had grown up in households with new technologies that altered work patterns and gender roles, included diversified and nutritious diets, improved hygiene and the ability to amass goods. They regarded the Filipinos as ignorant. So, for example, they championed baseball as a substitute for cock fights.

The Foundations of the American Century: 1900–45

With the Monroe Doctrine, America claimed the right to intervene in neighbouring countries where social unrest or political upheaval threatened its security. The next vignette centres on the building of the Panama Canal, an extraordinary large scale and complex project, completed in 1914. Whilst the French had failed to construct a canal, the Americans designed sophisticated lock systems and cleared large areas of rain forest. The new canal provided access to the Pacific from the Atlantic and became a means to counter Japanese ambitions after their defeats of China and Russia. The US mounted a blatant challenge to Japan in the Pacific. Additionally, between 1914 and 1917 America moved to dominate markets in Latin America and Asia. The canal provided control of the Caribbean.

By 1917 American trade with Britain and France had increased 180% and America moved from being the largest debtor to the largest creditor. In the First World War America became a major supplier of munitions and especially vehicles. Very soon American organizational aptitudes in training, transporting, supplying and organizing its forces daunted Europeans. The transcontinental system provided a powerful matrix for protecting technical assistance and material assistance in other nations. At this time scientism influenced the social sciences. American historians were more concerned with the failed peace than the carnage. The depression after 1929 slowed productivity, but provided examples of major New Deal projects (e.g. the work conducted under the Tennessee Valley Authority) which were later transported abroad even though they were inscribed with practices which ill-suited these other contexts.

Imposing Modernity in the Cold War: USA v. USSR

During the Second World War the USA was situated in a sanctuary surrounded by two vast oceans. It was spared destruction and occupation. It possessed a gigantic transcontinental infrastructure of transportation and communications and accounted for two thirds of the world's merchant navy. America possessed the world's most mechanized military and could mobilize vast resources. For example, the US supplied the USSR with 500,000 vehicles and produced two-thirds of the military equipment for the Allied forces. America achieved high economic productivity and developed advanced technologies. There was a vast educational and training investment in people combined with familiarity with and access to diverse technologies. The US Air Force dominated Germany and led to the extraordinary invasion of Normandy. After 1945 the USA retained the military balance in Western Europe and south-east Asia. Americans were convinced that World War II was a capitalist crusade in which consumption and luxury had been sacrificed for the effort.

During the subsequent Cold War American political doctrines contrasted the First and Third World. They viewed China as economically exploited, humiliated, culturally disoriented, colonized and pillaged. The Soviets promoted communism and used American social science critiques as material for their cause. American apprehension led to intensified efforts to overhaul security through the systematic gathering of intelligence from area studies, think tanks, knowledge pooling, and massive programmes of government-funded research.

The field of developmental studies and then modernization theory became the dominant ideological and policy responses to the threat of communist expansion. Modernization theory resuscitated, elevated and hid general claims about America's superior technical prowess. The intellectual underpinnings can be traced back to the enlightenment. Within developmental studies and modernization theory the oeuvre of W. W. Rostow occupies a pivotal position. He treated the post-colonial nations as a single undifferentiated entity (e.g. China + Africa) in which tradition was equated with superstition. Rostow was obsessively preoccupied with ideological differences and global rivalries. He promoted free market solutions, individual enterprise, competition and the reforming of nations. His development theory was a Baconian world view in deciphering indexes, devising formulas and transferring technologies. The central goal of development was that of transforming the existing political and economic institutions. His theory privileged urban coalitions of professional men and politicians whilst subordinating peasant women (through e.g. birth control in India). After the 1954 Geneva accord, Rostow promoted developmental projects and economic assistance with Vietnam as a testing ground. The main beneficiaries were private firms and expert advisers. However, the realities contrasted with modernization theory.

US Technology in a Vietnam Quagmire

American technological prowess was, however, countered in Vietnam. Adas suggests that quantification and abstract modelling obviated the serious consideration of historical precedents and enduring socio-cultural patterns. He contends that if these had been taken into account different decisions about US involvement might have been made. In practice the communists proved adept at circumventing sophisticated American technologies. Opponents chose significant places and moments in the battleground, and Americans certainly misunderstood guerrilla warfare.

End Point: The Paradox of Technological Superiority

Today the US produces sufficient food for its population from only 2% of the working population. During the Cold War the US developed sophisticated surveillance of Soviet submarines and a huge military arsenal. The US became accustomed to intervention with impunity. The end of the Cold War removed the legitimacy of the American crusade for democracy. Even so, the US has deployed unprecedented military superiority over any potential adversary with very low levels of military casualties and miniscule civilian casualties compared with the proportion of civilian to total death rates of 70% in Korea and an estimated 80% in North Vietnam.

The collapse of the USSR in 1989 raised America's sense of national security and power, but did not lead to a great deal of investment in complex defensive tech systems. The events of 9/11 in 2001 destroyed the two World Trade Towers

previously devised to maximize the scale of financial return. Paradoxically the new technologies enabled groups opposing America to develop their own revolutionary strategies. Adas concludes by observing that the resurgence of America's civilizing rhetoric since 9/11 has been accompanied by a combination of claims about nation building projects and by violent interventions. The US has found forced entry much easier than short term occupations (e.g. Iraq). The new dangers are of over commitment and a shift to military spending.

Two Key Questions

Dominance by Design is an important account of innovation, technology, the US, and the interplay between these dynamics. It provides an account that is often wide-ranging, dealing with, for example, religious belief, which differentiates it from other treatments of this topic. The empirical vignettes are also engaging and the book overall is written in an involving way. Finally the emphasis on the desire to pursue a 'civilizing mission' in the US is a significant theme that is often lost in accounts of innovation and national business systems. However, the book raises two significant questions.

The first is the structure and style of the historical narrative presented. We shall argue that this is more than a methodological issue; it is fundamental to the ability of the book to persuade. We contend that the form of history in this book is seriously under-examined by the author. Second, and related, is the treatment of time and place, and in particular the small amount of periodizing that the author adopts. It is these two issues that we take up in the next two sections of this review.

Representations of the Past: Dominating History

Writing history is a practice that has recently come under scrutiny from a variety of perspectives: alternative approaches such as counterfactual history are proposed, the epistemological assumptions of history are examined, and the purpose of history is questioned. Writing and reading history is probably more complex and controversial than at any point since Herodotus first wove an eclectic mixture of personal experience, reported narrative, speculation, and invention into inquiries into the nature of fifth century BC cultures by Marincola.[5] It would then be disingenuous to provide a review of what is presented as a historical text without exploring the nature of the history being written; to do this, we have chosen to interpret Adas' work in the light of Ricoeur's recent exploration of history as act, text and thought.[6]

Ricoeur suggests that history ought to be situated on private, professional and public levels. History is after all based on the private thoughts and memories of individuals, in which memory and forgetting condition what is written. Professionally, those writing history from memories then have an obligation to ensure that the epistemologies of witnessing and archives are explored, especially if we are to trust a historian's use of 'because' in explaining acts or events. Finally, historians are bound by a public obligation, a form of civic duty, to examine what is remembered and what is forgotten, and why.

All of this contributes to our theme for this section, the problematic that Ricoeur labels the 'representation of the past', and defines as an *eikōn*. In this frame, history is an image or likeness of the past, an absent thing that is made present through a narrator's imagination. As we have indicated above, we believe

that Adas' work is a fine example of this form of imaginative history—well-written, clearly theorized and coherent. However we found no acknowledgement that the processes of researching and writing history that the argument of the book is based on are acts of imagination.

Perhaps the most striking example of this is the vignette that begins Chapter 4. Adas argues that one of the foundations of the American century is the Panama Canal. Multiple meanings are read into the US-led building of the canal. First, we are invited to note that a French-led attempt had failed during the nineteenth century; second, the changing attitude of the Japanese government is explored. From recommending that Japanese labourers should not be permitted to work on such a dangerous site, we are told that attitudes shifted to acknowledgement that the US had become a global power, with engineering skill and determination that outshone all other nations. Yet this account of changing Japanese opinion neglects to mention that current estimates suggest that more than 25,000 people died during the building of the canal—is it possible that the Japanese were right initially in discouraging their people from working in the terrible conditions of Panama, and subsequently also justified in heaping praise on the 'manly [American] engineers' in order to enable their shipping to make use of the canal?

This is not to suggest that there is anything fictional or false about this book. Rather, it is to introduce the possibility that the claims advanced in *Domination by Design* are underpinned by a series of steps identified by Ricoeur that should form part of the representation we are given in the book. For example, the vignettes sprinkled throughout are written to give the impression that there is one coherent, agreed interpretation of events, such as Admiral Perry's expedition to Japan or building the Panama Canal. The processes of recollection, reconstruction, representation and imagination that this event underwent are absent from the account. This is presumably intended to convince the reader that the account and the conclusions drawn from it are more credible, than if multiple or contested interpretations were presented. Individual memories are thus transformed into a collective understanding, without consideration of the nature of the testimony the narrative is based on. This pattern is repeated throughout the book, through the centuries that the vignettes symbolize right to the present moment when the current 'war on terror' is explored.

The author implicitly asks the reader to trust him, to take the epistemology of the account for granted, and to accept that while there may be more to the narrative than we know, it is not worth making present. For us then, Adas' approach to writing history is based on what Ricoeur calls 'simple evocation'. This elides the effort of recall and the possibility of error or illusion in remembering. While this may not in itself be problematic, it does mean that there is a lack of reflexivity in the text. The act of remembering, and acknowledging that act, inevitably involves recalling that we are embedded in a world, alongside other actors, and therefore that remembering is a reflexive act. Historians are implicated as agents, with the potential to use and abuse memory, making history a political act as well as a technical or imaginative one.

Yet is Adas unusual in this? We would suggest not. History as a discipline and historians as an academic tribe are notoriously resistant to considering issues of epistemology or methodology beyond dichotomies such as true/false or reliable/unreliable. Ricoeur's work is an attempt to bring history into the social sciences and to make the philosophical project that informs it less tacit—in other words, to make history as a practice more self-aware and less self-sufficient. Reading

Dominance by Design through this prism, we are almost bound to find it lacking; indeed, we would happily acknowledge that Ricoeur is presenting an ideal type of history and historian. However we would also suggest that to ignore the recent history of history as Adas does results in the text being less credible or convincing, rather than more. This is particularly true for us when claims are made to provide explanation that involves use of the 'because' connector, which this book provides many examples of. The core argument summarized at the beginning of this review is the most obvious example, but many others are found throughout the text.

This leads us to our final point in this section. We would suggest that Adas' work is intended to provide a means of the US understanding itself, from colonial foundation through revolution and civil war to contemporary dominance and perhaps disillusion or future destruction. For us, the book is in part an attempt to encourage reconciliation, both within the US and between the US and those it dominates. We might even consider the book to be a step on the way to Ricoeur's ideal of happy, peaceful, reconciled memory. Yet he also notes that history can never achieve this ideal, because of the writing that is so essential to the historiographical operation and the systems of explanation and understanding it involves. There is hope, however, if the process can be as reflective as possible, engaged with questions of justice, and continually open for reconsideration. Perhaps it is this final point that provides most scope, if we idealize the academic process somewhat as a continuous process of dialogue, debate and thought.

The second main issue concerns the vignettes and time–place periodizing as case studies.

Time–Place Periods as Case Studies: Team Work 1870–90s

In this section we use the approach of time–place periods[7] as case studies to suggest potential revisions to the historical approach to vignettes used by Adas. His definition of technology emphasizes discipline and teamwork, as was illustrated by the vignette of the landing by Admiral Perry in Tokyo, 1853–54. However, the evolving character of team work is not periodized within the lengthy time-span covered in *Dominance by Design*. To explore this we take the case of the origins of American football and its significant relationship to team work and discipline.

The rationale for periodizing is to distinguish turning points and shifts in the overall configuration of relationships (as also mentioned in Ricoeur's recent work). For example, the American Civil War is regarded as a world event. Before the Civil War, America was more of a horizontal then a vertical society. During and afterwards the federal state acquired considerable powers and there were alterations in the constitution. The fighting of the Civil War was a short period of remarkable transformations in military strategy and the development of complex repertoires for organizing different kinds of military activity. Post bellum America became a consumer polity and began to develop a market empire.

We illustrate our argument with a post bellum innovation in team-and-work: American football. We focus upon the period from 1870 into the 1890s. Within that period the configuration of structures and processes was evolving yet retained enduring features which were transformed in the twentieth century. Studies of American football have tended to briefly narrate the origins and then jump to the contemporary structure and organization of its team work. There is a tendency to take the remarkable time–space features of the game today as being present in the

1880s. That approach comes too close to presentism: the imposing of the present upon the past.

American football surfaced in the late 1870s as a hybrid winter game of carrying and kicking an oval shaped ball. The game emerged from experiments in playing English rugby union, association football and indigenous games, mainly in leading north eastern universities, especially Harvard, in the period from 1870 to 1880.[8] In 1873, four universities agreed to use rules similar to, yet different from, rugby union for one season: Yale, Princeton, Rutgers and Columbia. In 1876, two representatives from Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Columbia agreed similar rules and established the Intercollegiate Board to regulate disputes. Yale accepted the rules but declined a place on the board.

Meanwhile at Harvard a small group experimented with the recently codified rules of the English game of rugby. The English game made scrummaging the central activity whereby the two opposing teams committed almost all their players to pushing and shoving the oval ball. If the ball exited from this scrummage accidentally then there were moments of open free play of running with the ball by the side which had the ball. These were short moments because the ball carrier was almost always rapidly overpowered. Deliberate exiting of the ball from the scrummage was not allowed. Harvard did play rugby in the English format with McGill University in 1874 but there were no intercollegiate games within America for the English game. At Harvard the male students from the upper strata preferred that the ball exited from the scrummage quickly so that they could engage in open play and decisively confront the opposing team. They experimented by altering the English rules to permit one designated player on each team to exit the ball deliberately from the scrummage. This soon led to the rule of the 'down' in which play started from a static confrontation of the teams. These rule changes exemplify an architectural innovation because they transformed the scrummage into the American scrimmage in which one side controlled the ball. The rule allowed the side holding the ball to retain the ball provided they advanced five yards. In 1880 and 1882 these revisions to rugby union were confirmed by the Intercollegiate Board. These rules largely defined the game until the forward pass was permitted in 1906 (although it was not fully deployed until 1912–13).

During the period from 1876 to the 1890s a very small, rapidly growing subset of American universities began to engage in this intercollegiate winter sport, that was entirely different from the English version and still largely unknown in the USA. However, the universities were highly visible and their alumni migrated to occupy key positions within varied elites. From 1882 into the 1890s American football was an increasingly violent spectacle of confrontation between opposing teams of athletic males. Although the game involved violent confrontations between the side carrying the ball and its opponents, all those connected with the game proclaimed its amateur status within American sporting life. They ridiculed professional boxing for its violence, yet in American football the flying wedge formation caused very severe injuries and numerous deaths.

The highly episodic nature of the American game permitted the players to envisage a repertoire of strategic and tactical moves which could be rehearsed in considerable detail. More significantly, the chess-like quality of the strategic intent was seized upon by Walter Camp at Yale. Although a voluntary unpaid advisor to the university team, he devoted two decades to developing the strategic potentials within the non-continuous format of play. His influence was remarkable. He led many rule changes and influenced the decision to reduce the number of players

from 15 to 11. He had played for six years at Yale as a running back—a new position and role—and recognized the possibilities for pre-planning in sport to parallel pre-planning as an activity in the new corporations.[9] He argued that teamwork required well rehearsed players operating to a game plan which was based on the temporal state of the match. He had a clear vision of teams creating repertoires of plays which could be mixed to confuse the expectations of the opposition. The episodic form of American football and its four quarters enabled the coaches to prepare sequences of plays and to signal the implicit game plan in various covert ways to the players on the field. Camp set out to bring order and to eliminate chance by opening the possibilities for carefully planned and rehearsed manoeuvres. He consciously sought to rationalize the division of labour between the positions. Camp continually constructed the purposeful work of American football, in contrast with what he saw as the chaotic play of English rugby. He also used many military metaphors: kicking high into opposing territory was artillery work, the mass momentum play formations (e.g. flying wedge) were the tactical equivalent of warfare, strategy required generalship and the pounding of weak points in the line of the opposition. Camp considered he was replacing individual superiority with effort for collective purpose. Finally he was very clear that the game prepared men for becoming corporate elites.

In the 1880s there was also a massive growth in newspaper sales and influence. Their style was to be entertaining and informative. Oriard[10] shows that the newspapers began to report the big college games in spectacular spreads with sensational illustrations. The games became major public events. There was a shift from a campus based encounter to a public event. Often several pages were devoted to narrating how the chess-like pattern of the encounter unfolded. Oriard contends that American football uniquely enables detailed discussion and reflection about the pattern of moves associated with specific college teams. The press taught the public how to read the game as a cultural event, interpreting the action of a game rather than chronicling. The drama was presented as 'order or chaos' and 'play and work'. By the turn of the century American football, still a largely amateur college game, had gone nationwide.

Clearly the game played in 1900 possessed only some of the features found in the age of television. There was no forward throw, limited substitutions and slight role specialization. However, the spatio-temporal narratives within which the game unfolded were already in place.

The advantage of time–place periods as case studies is that they permit the tracing of how specific features of the American design for dominance evolved as innovations within key contexts. So, we can speculate that the modern game of American football, considerably evolved from its origins, might have provided templates for the American military over the past four decades. In Vietnam this template had considerable unintended consequences.

Coda: Understanding the Historical Act

This account of technology, innovation and the US provides a well-written and imaginative narrative of nearly four centuries, looking east and west across the two oceans that bound the USA. In particular we appreciated the thread in the argument relating to religious belief, so often neglected in accounts of commerce, and the acknowledgement of nature as crucial to activities on the US mainland and during interventions elsewhere. The elegant conclusions noting that the US may

now be under threat from intervention from crusading outsiders with religious visions of the future is especially interesting.

However, we have also sought through this review to locate this book theoretically with reference to contemporary debates around the act of writing history and organization studies. In doing this, our intention is not to challenge the historical basis or even the argument of *Dominance by Design*. Rather, we are suggesting ways of interpreting the book that are theoretically additive to it.

Some feel that there is little in the historiographical operation that we can feel confident of any more, if we take into account the linguistic turn in the social sciences, and that this is a retrogressive development for those involved in writing history. We prefer to believe that there is still worth in attempting to research and write historically, as long as the tacit rules or conventions are acknowledged. History is, after all, a process of decoding and encoding events, to reach a convincing representation of the past, present and future. This book has many and considerable strengths, but it remains figurative and allegorical, and it is worth taking this into account when reading or reflecting on it.

Notes and References

1. Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistibile Empire. America's Advance through Twentieth Century Europe*, Belknap, New York, 2005; Peter Clark and Emanuela Todeva, 'Unmasking America: de Grazia's market empire advancing through twentieth century Europe', *Prometheus*, 24, 1, 2006, pp. 107–20.
2. Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 2004; Peter Clark, 'America's market polity of knowledge and Ferguson's stumbling colossus', *Prometheus*, 23, 1, 2005, pp. 91–110.
3. Thomas Hughes, *American Genesis*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1989.
4. Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America and the World 1600–1898*, Atlantic Books, London, 2006.
5. John Marincola, 'Introduction', in Herodotus, *The Histories*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1996.
6. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005.
7. Jeffrey Haydu, 'Making use of the past: time periods as case studies to compare and as sequences of problem solving', *American Journal of Sociology*, 104, 2, 1998, pp. 339–71.
8. David Riesman and Norman Denney, 'Football in America: a case study', in David Riesman (ed.), *Culture Diffusion, Individualism Reconsidered*, Doubleday, New York, 1954; Peter Clark, *Anglo-American Innovation*, de Gruyter, Berlin, 1987, chap. 6.; Michael Oriard, *Reading Football. How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle,* University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1993.
9. James Beniger, *The Control Revolution. Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1986.
10. Oriard, *op. cit.*