

A Movement in the Mystery

2004

Tags

[Picture in picture](#)

[Urban interest](#)

[Media and Ethics](#)

The dark side of exposure is overexposure

— Thomas Keenan, *Mobilizing Shame*

The king as a subject (and then again no)

“Bush aesthetics,” I don’t know if I heard the term or if I invented it. Tom Keenan says that we are in an age where “the aesthetic finds itself in extreme proximity to the ethico-political”¹⁴; yet we did go through Goebbels and Speer in the last century, we did go through a period when propaganda was in no way an aside but the very essence of the National Socialist project¹⁵. Either way, we can use a short definition to elucidate what is meant here by “Bush aesthetics,” because it’s not merely about the histrionics of it all. Let’s put it this way: when the Colombian president Alvaro Uribe woke up one day in 2002 and renamed all the 40 year old Maoist, Leninist, Trotskyite, and even the younger far right armed groups under the single rubric of “terrorist” he was subscribing to that aesthetics. An analysis of the new Coca-Cola advertisement campaign could be as good a definition, but we’ll come back to that later.

There is something that sprung up amidst the ashes of Ground Zero, a construction that is built on the precepts of a very clever architecture. A solid building—indestructible even—with the most surprising invention of them all incorporated into it: the fact that it has no foundation. Let’s say that it is clever in the same way that it is mindless. The notion of a “ground zero”—and if you want also a “year zero”—in the sense of an absolute disregard of history—permeates the whole project from A to Z. The world according to Bush is like a novel by James Joyce: the word names the reality that the word names again. So the building is indestructible, truly fluid, in the same way that a “war on terror” can't be lost and can't be won. Any therapist of “panic disorders” could tell you that the fight against panic is the very formula that panic needs to flourish. And this is not a far-fetched analogy.

Type this address on your browser and watch the extract of the 2006 White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner:

(24 min)

Watch the masterful blows of Stephen Colbert, jester of the court; watch an intricate,

sophisticated attack on everything the Bush administration stands on. Then also watch—by then, hopefully in total fascination—an apotheosis, an overjoyed celebration of the president. Praise to the CSPAN cameraman who focuses on Karl Rove's expression when the deed is done, when the whole press corps stands up in an exhilarated ovation of George W. Bush. And I underline that this happens after not only Colbert but also Bush himself have aired everything that is rotten to the core. They don't call Rove the “architect” for nothing, and I agree with that cameraman, it all had to have come from that postmodern genius.

Washington-based author and journalist Ron Suskind was able to gel it all succinctly. Two weeks before Bush's re-election he put the finger on the kind of labyrinth-like, and at the same time, plain-as-plain-can-be, impossibility to beat or even address the “faith-based administration¹⁶.” Below is a quote that sums it up. At the time Suskind's article was published I forwarded it to everyone I knew. Now I can see that it became a kind of conceptual platform for the critics of the administration (it is clear to me that Colbert's satire also has its roots here):

The (Bush administration) aide said that guys like me were ‘in what we call the reality-based community,’ which he defined as people who ‘believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.’ I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. ‘That's not the way the world really works anymore,’ he continued. ‘We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality—judiciously, as you will—we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors...and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.’¹⁷

Type this address on your browser and watch the episode of CNN's Crossfire, where it was Crossfire itself that became “collateral damage”:

(14 min)

As much as I appreciate the knock-out delivered by another comedian—Jon Stewart—to Paul Begala and Tucker Carlson, the hosts of *Crossfire*, I think it was their lack and not Stewart's virtue (which I don't doubt for a second) that brought them down. The thing is, Stewart was emphasizing the fact that their show was based on that word that has become an obsession in American vernacular, “spinning.” He was wishing, or rather longing, for a “no spin zone” (a term that Fox News has since trademarked). Stewart was chastising their daily transit through “deception lane,” as he characterized what was then called “spin alley,” the place where pundits would wrestle with interpretations of the presidential debates, while the facts were still fresh and malleable. “Spin alley” is a materialization of Nietzsche's famous notion that “there are no facts, only interpretations” in American contemporary politics. And

Stewart was longing for a solid ground, a solid politics of solid principles dealing with a solid reality. He beat the *Crossfire* hosts by the use of inventive rhetorical devices that were at the service of an old paradigm...but the fabulous comedian *beat them good* nevertheless.

Type this address on your browser and watch another extract from the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner:

(11 min)

When Charles I's jester, Thomas Killigrew, said he could make a pun on any subject, the king said: "make one on me." Killigrew replied that he couldn't because "the king is no subject." With this we come to the last part of the evening at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. Out goes Colbert and in comes a double of George W. who stands next to Bush. This impersonation is a kind of unconscious Bush, speaking his mind in an introspective daze. What's staged is at best farcical but, of course, given the circumstance, hilarious. Bush and himself really go far into the irreverence register, they "reach the parts," as the old Guinness campaign of the eighties would proclaim. It is painful to see the real Bush repeat the word "nukelar" after the actor says "nuclear" (Laura Bush had already made fun of her husband regarding the same pronunciation problem, at the correspondents dinner the previous year.) As Felix Guattari writes, the role of the media is about the production of subjectivities, and here we witness the splayed and naked production of the "President Bush" subjectivity: an empty sign of the media, a figment, a hollowed-out signifier, a shell (*le president mis à nu par ses media même*). But no harm done, Bush doesn't need to be filled or redressed. Where's the fool? You thought you saw a double image, but the double image that you saw, when the final applause had broken, was not the one you thought you were seeing. The second image, the one you couldn't even fathom as you were inebriated by your triumphant liberal laughter *c l e a r l y p r o n o u n c e s* the words that count: "...I thank you for giving me a chance to laugh tonight. I got one more thing I want to share with you, on my mind, something that is never far from my mind... God bless our troops, God bless the cause of freedom, and God bless America."

Anything that was said before is rendered instantly null and void. This show of pathetic contingency is a lengthy preparation for the absolutely transcendent moment that will make its triumphant appearance at the end. From the greatest maelstrom, from the ruins of it all, from the utter bankruptcy of every value America and the West ever stood on, Bush walks out unscathed, like a magician. Everything was proven wrong and no argument was needed. Read Suskind's quote again— Bush's detractors are lost before they even start talking, there is an irrevocable truth that is beyond question, that is set forth in full force, and without a doubt at the end, *framing* it all. On the other side of the world there are war criminals, corrupt rulers being judged for this and that. On this side there is the sovereign Bush

administration (“sovereign of sovereigns,” that is what “only superpower” stands for in the ineffable world of International Law¹⁸). Giorgio Agamben repeats several times, throughout his theorization of the state of exception in *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life* the maxim of the sovereign paradox: “I, the sovereign, who stand outside of the law declare that there is no outside of the Law.” As I saw the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner in Google video—the most surprising function of the Internet is its function as a reflexive dam of the media’s vertiginous flow—I remembered a passage from that same book where Agamben quotes Ernst Kantorowicz’s *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* where the notion of a “mystical” or “political body” is brought about. “...thus it is as if the emperor had in himself not two bodies but rather two lives inside one single body: a natural life and a sacred life¹⁹.” The amazing feat of the staging of Bush and his double is that it is an intricate yet impeccable operation by which to reinstate the separation between Bush, the civilian, the Gin and Tonic fraternity boy, and something else. What is that something else? Who or what enters the scene triumphantly in the last second, ending all the sound and the fury? The “sacred life” of the sovereign. At the other extreme of the spectrum there is an “enemy combatant” who shares the same condition of the sovereign in that the law applies to him in no longer applying, someone who is “...neither man nor beast, and who dwells paradoxically within both while belonging to neither.”²⁰

The curtain to fall (and then again no)

Returning to a more pedestrian dimension, there’s no major difference between the stupidity of defining oneself as a “conspiracy theorist” and the stupidity of every one of us who can’t help but expect some kind of curtain to fall. In this characterization I’m making I could define a liberal as “someone who expects the curtain to fall,” and a neoconservative as “someone who knows it won’t matter.” You have a sure shot (a slam dunk) when you *re-scenarize* the world over and over, and you are always ready to present the truthful documentary image of that which was *re-scenarized* by you²¹.

Conspiracy theory is analogical to Baudrillard’s famous notion about Disneyland: there is nothing that isn’t *conspiratorial*, nothing that has *just happened*. So when you name something as a *conspiracy* you automatically save the transparency of all the rest. The well-intentioned twenty-something enthusiast who makes a documentary such as “Loose change” (<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2dz3on>) “with pizza money,” is working for his enemy. Ideologically, the more he exposes the mystery, and the more his delirium/lucidity brings him closer to a real uncovering of the real inconsistencies of the official story, the deeper in the mud he sinks. He is like all the Hollywood *noir* detectives who lose everything in the frenzied madness of their investigation. And for a constant unconscious hope in the public on matters of accountability and transparency, Hollywood (also ideologically) rescues these characters from their pit of unshaved alcoholism. So they always experience an epiphany, where everything is uncovered without the shadow of a doubt. Not so on this side of the

rainbow, not so with the missile that hit the Pentagon ;)

Just today

To return to Keenan's article, while I find his arguments impeccable, he stays with a notion of "the image" that is somewhat restricted. The first question of his article concerns the *photo op*: "What difference would it make for human rights discourse to take the photo opportunity seriously?" Just today I was watching CNN's advert for a program called (I think) "International Correspondents," where the catch phrase was "when coverage is the story." I bring this up in order to say that the media is very well plugged into an introspective dimension about the kind of things that Keenan elucidates beautifully regarding Somalia and Kosovo; I mean, the fact that the image exists for the camera (or the story for the coverage). But what I am trying to get at is that the image may not be the image as we think of it when we say *photo op*. The intelligent opposition that Serge Daney articulated in the late 1980s between *production* and *programming* can be very useful here. I will use it candidly. *Photo op* is a term that belongs to the idea that an image has an intrinsic force, and that this force is produced, when in fact an image cannot be considered like that anymore. An image is *programmed*: it goes somewhere, it comes at a certain time, in a certain page of a magazine, there is a force behind its placement; it doesn't have an intrinsic vigor that will set forth its power no matter where it is²². "The movement is no longer in the images, in their metaphorical force or in our capacity to edit them together, it's in the enigma of the force that has programmed them (and here the reference to television—the triumph of programming over production—is unavoidable²³)." An image is a constellation of forces at play. Maybe this can also be said through one of Godard's classic aphorisms "Ce n'est pas une image juste, c'est juste une image," (it isn't just an image, it is just an image.) *Production* is the fabrication of the just image, the *opportunity* for a powerful image, the one with a solid core, set forth and standing alone in front of the world; *programming* is the activation of the force of any image (to go back to that term, the *spin* on an image).

Let's touch again on what is ideologically portrayed as left-wing "Internet" conspiracies: things written by fools, not for profit, not on cozy Primetime but on the seedy Internet, peripheral, in the underbelly of the culture, unconfirmed, not coming from experts, hence suspect, frivolous and unreliable. Regarding which there is something quite revealing that took place recently: five frames showing the airplane hitting the Pentagon on 9/11, from the vantage point of one of the Pentagon's own security cameras, had been "leaked"²⁴. It was all over the Internet, measurements of all kinds had been made on those frames by lone-ranger physicists and mathematicians—all of them quite convincingly showing that a jetliner could not be represented in the white thin object that appears on the frame before the blast. But that's not the point. Judicial Watch, a public interest group that investigates and prosecutes

government corruption, and whose motto is “because no one is above the law,” went to court to get surveillance camera footage from the CITGO gas station, the Sheraton Hotel, and the Virginia Department of Transportation, amongst others. Those tapes, that would have contained images of Flight 77 hitting the Pentagon, had been confiscated just a few minutes after impact by a surprisingly diligent FBI force. The Pentagon said it couldn’t release any of those images until the Zacarias Moussaoui trial was over, because they were being used as evidence. So the anticipation grew. This summer, finally, the time came when they had to release the tapes. We were all dying to see the new images; curiosity was peeking around the world, more so because it was supposedly a successful FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) case against the Pentagon. What a surprise: they released the very same images that were already out on the Internet. BUT every major news organization displayed headlines that said the conspiracy theories had been dispelled once and for all by the new video. The public’s suspicions were alleviated; and on they went to the next news. The strangest thing of all is that Judicial Watch doesn’t seem to have complained about not getting what they had asked for. It’s the perfect card trick: basically you peak public attention in order to drop it. The small percentage of people who were aware of the questions at stake was left speechless.

My point is that the battle of images is won without *photo ops* nowadays; it is all about tempo, placement, repetition, it’s grade school psychology, the kind of operation that permanently disarms any analytical, discerning mind. When there is no argument against a valid reasonable claim, and when that non-argument still wins, hands down, then analysis itself is a lost endeavor. If you have to explain you are losing, you are literally wasting time, because meanwhile someone else is chiming the bell that moves A.D.D.-ridden public attention elsewhere. And your argument, which may be irrefutable, will nevertheless be left unread and unseen.

A New Kind of Player

According to British journalist Robert Fisk, Hizbu’llah were so geared up for the last major conflict with Israel that their own television station, *Al-Manar* had prepared a backup broadcast station in a bunker, ready to start transmitting if the first one was destroyed. From the start their cameras were aimed at the Israeli warship off the coast of Beirut, which was to be the first target of Hizbu’llah’s rockets. Everything went as planned and when the Israeli army thought they had managed to destroy Al-Manar’s capacity to produce a live transmission, the image of the warship destroyed by Hizbu’llah’s rockets reappeared on the TV sets—Hizbu’llah’s glowing prize, the image of a strike on the face of their Goliath. They had programmed it. One might even think that Hizbu’llah was so much on top of this *programming* paradigm, so well inside the TV set—so to speak—that they even waited for the FIFA World Cup to finish before crossing the unspoken taboo line that would unleash the disproportionate, obscene reaction of Israel; the one that they knew they could count on.

Again, this recalls what Daney had noticed as a shift from the paradigm of cinema to that of television. Deleuze has a second take on the same argument when he says that the history of cinema was a history of ethics and aesthetics, an adventure of perception; and that history was finished when the image entered the dimension of “control,” the dimension of television.

According to British journalist Robert Fisk, Hizbu’llah were so geared up for the last major conflict with Israel that their own television station, *Al-Manar* had prepared a backup broadcast station in a bunker, ready to start transmitting if the first one was destroyed. From the start their cameras were aimed at the Israeli warship off the coast of Beirut, which was to be the first target of Hizbu’llah’s rockets. Everything went as planned and when the Israeli army thought they had managed to destroy Al-Manar’s capacity to produce a live transmission, the image of the warship destroyed by Hizbu’llah’s rockets reappeared on the TV sets—Hizbu’llah’s glowing prize, the image of a strike on the face of their Goliath. They had programmed it. One might even think that Hizbu’llah was so much on top of this *programming* paradigm, so well inside the TV set—so to speak—that they even waited for the FIFA World Cup to finish before crossing the unspoken taboo line that would unleash the disproportionate, obscene reaction of Israel; the one that they knew they could count on. Again, this recalls what Daney had noticed as a shift from the paradigm of cinema to that of television. Deleuze has a second take on the same argument when he says that the history of cinema was a history of ethics and aesthetics, an adventure of perception; and that history was finished when the image entered the dimension of “control,” the dimension of television.

Hizbu’llah understood that it wasn’t enough to produce the image of a burning Israeli warship, but that it had to be transmitted live. The image had to be programmed for a certain hour in a certain week of a certain month. Never has Israel been caught more off-guard, Hizbu’llah had become a different kind of player, oriented by a new paradigm.

Back, once again, to the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner. Colbert mentioned Frank Rich and asked the president if he would like to have him “bumped.” He repeated the word twice, making it clear that he meant, “taken care off” (“I know some guys...”). Who is this man that is supposedly doing harm to the administration? A man who they used to call the “Butcher of Broadway” and who the right-leaning media now calls the “Butcher of the Beltway” (as in the *Bible Beltway*). Somebody who went from covering theater plays for the *New York Times* to writing devastating Op Eds, and who now has “dropped” a book called *The Greatest Story Ever Sold: the Decline and Fall of Truth, From 9/11 to Katrina*. It is not a coincidence that a writer who understood theater could be the one equipped to appreciate the full dimension of the Bush aesthetics. I admire his ability to describe and expose the devices, machinations and creative set designs of the administration, I find it all very lucid; except for his conclusions. The cover of Rich’s book

shows the famous Bush-as-Tom Cruise on the USS Lincoln in 2003. In a recent interview on NPR Rich explains how they planned the event for the time in the evening that Hollywood calls the “magic hour,” and how the San Diego skyline was cleverly made to be just off-screen in order for it to look like a triumph at sea. Then he elaborates on the intricate diplomacy of the administration in trying to disown the “mission accomplished” banner that was hung behind Bush when he delivered his victory speech; and how Karl Rove later admitted it had all been a PR mistake. I really don’t think so. Rich himself is ready to believe that the United States Government went into Iraq knowing full well that they wouldn’t find any WMD. In both cases the PR campaign was an absolute success. What does it matter that the “judicious” analysis proves that you were wrong? What does it matter if you did play your cards right in the present, when it mattered, when the spotlight was on, and you ended up where you wanted to be? Rich seems to stay close to the “shame by exposure” paradigm of Keenan’s article. Take the case of his discovery that Ashcroft called an emergency news conference during a trip to Moscow to announce the apprehension of Jose Padilla, a Puerto Rican who was supposed to be orchestrating the detonation of a dirty bomb (and who has, to this date, not been officially charged with anything). Rich uncovered the fact that Padilla had been apprehended a whole month before Ashcroft’s news conference. So there was nothing going on in that news conference other than a deliberate manipulation of public opinion (let’s call it “public opinion management” to erase any moral tone). Think of the genius of saying “nuclear threat” to post 9/11 Americans while you are in Moscow of all places. The discovery of deceptions goes on and on, as we all know: networks reporting prefabricated propaganda from the White House *as news*, and everything else. But, at the end, all that Rich can do with his catalog of lucid discoveries about the “masters of spin and media manipulation,” is to say that he would be less cynical if the administration had a better record of telling the truth, if they didn’t “place politics over everything.” This is where I have a distance with Rich: either you play the game by structuring a new kind of ethics, a forthcoming one that learns how to swim in the infotainment, infomercial post-advertisement pool, or you are caught in a trap; caught in the nostalgic dream of a less mediatized world. Of course there is no transparency, nor a fair playing field, so the question is how to offer something inside of the lopsided court where you stand without *just* uncovering over and over the conspiracy at play; without *only* signaling to the unfairness of it all, without trying to *shame* the other into a *mea culpa* recital.

Yesterday Amnesty International was chastising Hizbu’llah for aiming at civilians. Not Israel but Hizbu’llah. Everyone’s jaw drops. Israel concocts the self-image of a gracious, ethical performer of surgical strikes, which are *never* aimed at civilians. These famous “innocent civilians” are the pawns of a strategic game. They are really *shelled*, not only on a literal level, but also in the sense of being emptied of flesh, like a crustacean is. “Innocent civilians” now means something very restricted within strategic quasi-mathematical parameters of the military media machine. We see no blood when we hear that word, just calculations, numbers. As someone wrote in *Le Monde Diplomatique* the other day, the underlying common sense is that a beheading is barbaric, but to kill massively in a so-called

surgical strike is civilized. Notice the word: clinical, scientific, proper. And above all, covered by a sense of lawfulness. Here we return to the beginning—the crimes of Israel in the last war are invisible because they are in full view. And I am going to stick my neck out here by making the taboo comparison—the one that almost no German ever wants to make, because it releases the complexity of that which they desperately want to remain closed in an airtight vacuum as the *horror of all horrors*, in the past. I need to clarify that this is a bracketed analogy, only on the aspect of the invisibility of a crime, no one is equating Nazism and Israel; and this is consciously said to avoid the usual frame. Sixty years ago, in the town where I live, people were waking up to something that had been happening in front of their eyes in such a way that it seemed like it wasn't happening. In many conversations with the persons who went through those times there is the mystery that one obsessively revisits: what was known about the camps? The image of the extermination being done under the guise of science, economics, health, law, not barbarity, rendered it an image of blood that could be seen and not seen at the same time; a murder that wasn't a murder, an exception. Years of progressive Nuremberg laws had created an image of the Jews as outside of the city of man, completely animalized. So their extermination wasn't murder, couldn't be seen as such, or maybe just in glimpses, in a semiconscious trance²⁵. The dead in Lebanon are also an exception to a rule, a rule that says that those rockets are not meant for them, so that the crime doesn't fall on anyone; it is, again, invisible. Amnesty International and its good human rights intentions can't address it; every convention has been honored. But those "innocent civilians" were nevertheless murdered.

Meta text and leader

Best to splice on some random leader at the end:

Today the CNN weatherman was forced to say, with a straight face, that a typhoon was in the path of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (I think its name was "Shanshan"). Today CNN included in its headline news that the United States Government officially gave the name "genocide" to what is happening in Darfur (avoiding the 1990s oxymoronic "acts of genocide" regarding Rwanda). Today the new campaign of Coca-Cola came out in Berlin, with the motto "Live on the Coke side of life"

(https://i1.wp.com/www.windowsoobserver.com/images/blog_images/74711b03e773_14649/5_coke_hf_windows7_010.jpg)²⁶

In the metro I saw a poster with a few cute chubby helicopters (a cross between a pig and Chinook helicopter) flying about in a psychedelic Sergeant Pepper kind of sky, playfully releasing fireballs here and there —underneath them, a red desert. The website also revealed that there was a fully-fledged cuddly-military-aesthetic going on, with parades of tin drum soldiers and all (which for some reason blow their wind instruments through their

noses instead of their mouths.



https://i0.wp.com/www.windowsoobserver.com/images/blog_images/74711b03e773_14649/6a_coke_hf_windows7_005.jpg

Some of it looks like a judgment day scene in the twenty-first century, upgraded, 1950s cartoon-style, with a beautiful, dreamlike *Tora Bora* backdrop.

The TV clip suggests a complicated enterprise, a *behind the scenes* wartime assembly line producing a single, grand bottle of Coke (a metaphorical history of the military-industrial complex?). It looks like a picture from an endless war; an endless war that you might as well enjoy...as a jackass, heart-of-darkness-water-skier in Mekong River, Vietnam, or by chilling out in a hot, apocalyptic Baghdad, next to one of Uday's Olympic pools. I am sorry to bring it up that "Live on the Coke side of life" is not footnoting Louis Armstrong as much as "they hate us for our freedoms"; colorful here, obscurantist elsewhere, don't think twice about it. That is the new aesthetic we're talking about, and there is no simple way to address it.

Related entries

- [Un movimiento en el misterio](#)
text

- ¹ Thomas Keenan, "Mobilizing Shame," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 103, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2004), pp. 435-44. Further Keenan quotes refer to this article.
- ² This is one of the main arguments of the short collaborative book Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Le Mythe Nazi* (La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube, 1991).
- ³ And let's make it very clear that it is a failure to do a simple epithetic characterization of the administration. This is precisely what Colbert was doing, in a brilliant way—if you wish, still it's a failure. Why? Because, again, there is no shaming by exposure, not in this world order, and short definitions of that kind seek to "reveal" by nominating the yet un-nominated, to ridicule it.
- ⁴ Ron Suskind, "Without a Doubt," *The New York Times Magazine*, October 17, 2004, <http://www.ronsuskind.com/articles/000106.html>.
- ⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford University Press, 1998).
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 105.
- ⁸ I borrow this term from Pierre Huyghe. See his recent interview with George Baker, "An Interview with Pierre Huyghe," *October*, vol. 110, no. 1 (November 2004), pp. 81-106.
- ⁹ For a continuation of this argument see Jean-Luc Godard "Regarding the advertisement cut on television," in *Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard*. Paris: Edition établie par Alain Bergala, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, 1998.
- ¹⁰ Serge Daney, "Du Défilement au defile," *La Recherche Photographique* 7 (Paris: Paris Audiovisuel, Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1989).
- ¹¹ "leaked" is also a genial way to shepherd the perception of an image—you are seeing what they didn't want you to see.
- ¹² "It would be more honest and, above all, more useful to investigate carefully the juridical procedures and deployments of power by which human beings could be so completely deprived of their rights and prerogatives that no act committed against them could appear any longer as a crime (At this point, in fact, everything had truly become possible.)" Agamben, *ibid.*, p. 171.
- ¹³ The TV clip that you find on the German website has a different soundtrack to the clips destined for the rest of the world. The German clip is the only one to have a marching drums soundtrack throughout, which gives it a completely different reading from the benign *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* kind of soundtrack used in the rest of the world (as far as I could see, apart from the German variation only the Russian clip has a different soundtrack, but that change is insubstantial—only some quirky sounds added to make the advert more slapstick in tone). Talking again from the platform of Daney's intuitions, the crystal of this discussion lies here: the images don't count on their own—their metaphorical power isn't there anymore, but rather "in the enigma of the force that has programmed them." How does Coke decide that the Germans, of all people, would prefer a military march soundtrack to the merry-go-round, factory of happiness kind? Do they use a focus group? I have several hypotheses but they don't really matter. What matters is the place of that mystery.