

**'FIERY THE ANGELS FELL': AMERICA, REGENERATION, AND
RIDLEY SCOTT'S *BLADE RUNNER***

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*Fiery the Angels rose, & as they rose deep thunder roll'd
Around their shores: indignant burning with the fires of Orc
And Boston's Angel cried aloud as they flew thro' the dark night.¹*

Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* indicates that the only possible path for the evolution of humanity to take is a regenerative one, specifically, by renewing earlier human precedents in an Edenic America. When the film was released in 1982, the United States was experiencing the economic policies of Reaganomics. By the time of the film's March release that year, Reagan had begun implementing cuts in education, welfare, and housing, he had increased defense spending, and had survived an assassination attempt. In the same year, Sylvester Stallone began his meteoric rise as Vietnam veteran John Rambo in *First Blood*. Like Nixon before him, taken by George C. Scott's portrayal of General Patton to the extent that he decided to invade Cambodia,² Ronald Reagan was so impressed by the revisionism personified in the warrior-hero figure of action and war cinema that he proclaimed he would send Rambo abroad in any future international emergencies.³ With this statement, and others like it,⁴ Reagan gave voice to a Vietnam myth that primarily had its foundation in the much older, and equally unfounded, archetype of the American warrior, effectively creating a cultural climate in which 1980s America was characterized not by progress but by a valorization of regression.

Because of a monumental and unprecedented moment of 'failure' in its history, then, the progress of America lay in its past: it had to go back, at the very least, to the days before Vietnam. To go forward, therefore, vitally depended upon going back. In this essay, it is argued that Scott's *Blade Runner*, although an unconventional film in many ways, is a product of this logic of regression in its suggestion that the preferable path for the development of humanity to take is a regenerative one. Viewed thus the film prompts one to make the point that the world beyond its technopolis is the same Edenic New World as America's fantasy past. To more fully understand *Blade Runner's* regenerative motif it is important to explore two specific themes that are raised by the film and which most significantly represent the sequence of creating anew from remnants of the old. Firstly, by opening an interpretive panorama on the word 'to fall', the film offers a view of evolution through the attempt to rebel against the status quo; and secondly, the prelapsarian archetypal configuration of Adam and Eve is reinterpreted by placing the regenerated self in an environment which holds

the promise of a renewed New World. To establish the first theme raised by the motif of regeneration in *Blade Runner*, it is important to consider the difference between the film's humans and its replicant humanoids.

When Roy Batty, the principal replicant played by Rutger Hauer, is first appraised by *Blade Runner's* camera, he quotes from Blake's 1793 'America, A Prophecy'. He deliberately misquotes the section he cites: 'Fiery the angels fell; deep thunder rolled around their shores, burning with the fires of Orc'. Very few commentators have noted this literary allusion, with the notable exception of Robin Wood, who suggests that, read against its original (which has here been cited in an epigraph), the 'near-quotation' discloses 'the end of the American democratic principle of freedom, its ultimate failure',⁵ a claim which he says is supported by the film's visual imagery that links Roy with the disintegration and urban squalor that surround him.

While Wood is right to connect the word 'to rise' with the birth of the new nation, his conclusion that 'falling' must be the end of this nation may be too reductive a reading. Roy Batty, the leader of the other Nexus 6 androids, could well be an interpretation of Blake's Orc, who heralds revolution, the cessation of restraint, and the inception of a new existence. By inserting lines from Blake's poem, Scott may have intended to signal that Batty is possessed by the spirit of Orc, and thus by the spirit of rebellion. Wood's suggestion that to 'fall' to earth is to symbolize the cessation of a democratic commitment to freedom is simply too narrow a reading of *Blade Runner's mise en scène*. After all, Blake's poem does not merely describe the end of British oppression in the American colonies, but also celebrates America's struggle and its Declaration of Independence -- its beginning as a democratic nation. Scott's importation of Blake, and hence (consciously or not) of a particular revolutionary mood, thus invokes a similar, and very substantial, mood of change, of an inception into a new mode of existence, and of a liberation from servitude and oppression.

Although the cityscape of *Blade Runner* is indeed a disintegrating one, and the words 'rise' and 'fall' are opposites, Blake toyed with opposites and contradictions throughout his career, and imbued Milton's morally ambiguous fallen angel Satan with an unequivocally attractive personality. Scott may have been aware of this system of subversion through inversion when he (and scriptwriter David Peoples) chose to insert the excerpt into the script - it's not in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, the novel upon which *Blade Runner* is based.⁶ Illegal on earth, the replicants descend onto LA, the city of angels,⁷ from above in order to meet their maker. The reversal of direction is necessary. Indeed, when Blake's angels finally land on American soil, they, too, 'descended/Headlong from out

their heav'nly heights, descending swift as fires/Over the land'.⁸ Above the land hovers Urizen, who -- arguably -- is Blake's version of a dogma imposing reason and restraint,⁹ and resides in a 'holy shrine', 'over the hills, the vales, the cities' and 'above all heavens, in thunders wrap'd'.¹⁰ This figure finds its echo in Tyrell, head of the corporation that manufactures Nexus 6 replicants for off-shore exports, and who, from his temple above the city, also appears to control the human society that remains on earth.

This controlling force in *Blade Runner* imposes its politics by way of a rhetoric of nature, and a subsidiary economic determinism intended to suppress both autonomous consciousness in labouring machines and independent critical thinking in their human counterparts. First, though, this imperialism is made possible by the authentication that comes with the act of production. As Marx and Engels proposed, production raises those who produce above that which they produce.¹¹ In the case of *Blade Runner*, a similar logic ensures that the status quo not only remains anthropocentric but that it can also be manipulated to distinguish between origins, cultures, and, here, genetic codings. Scott's film retains the novel's system of establishing the difference between human and replicant: the Voigt-Kampff empathy test.

The use of this mechanical empathy test to identify mechanical humans betrays a deep confusion about how humans are managing to identify themselves. To reduce this tenuousness in states of identity, and to create a zealous and vehement certainty about what constitutes the human, labouring humanoids are shipped to off-world colonies and programmed to expire after four years. Not only does their construction ensure that humans feel human, their subsequent status of virtual invisibility also protects humans from ever doubting their own humanity. The possibility that the human, normality, and nature have not actually been fathomed at all but are tentative is neutralized by way of both the construction and the subjugation of a genetically engineered *doppelgänger*. The governing body of *Blade Runner's* social universe, represented by the Tyrell Corporation (in charge not only of manufacturing androids, but of emigration to the New World and the commercial enterprises that either enable or disable one's means to re-settle), thus controls human self-perception to a repressive degree.

Speaking of the motif of repression in the horror film of the seventies, Robin Wood also suggests that what is generally repressed in twentieth-century Western culture is sexual energy, the source of creative energy. Its repression is usually enforced in the form of monogamous heterosexual union and non-creative, non-fulfilling labour. The ideal member of such a society, he claims, 'is as close as possible to an automaton in whom both sexual and intellectual energy has been reduced to a minimum'.¹² This

might be the crux of the films' version of capitalism, that is, by giving humans a new class to oppress, they are easily controlled because they regulate their own repression.

Taking his impetus from Barthes' *Mythologies*, Robin Wood goes on to give an apt example of self-repression through oppression. He suggests that if the other cannot be annihilated, a dominant norm, such as bourgeois ideology, renders it safe and assimilates it by 'converting it as far as possible into a replica of itself'.¹³ By making replicas of itself to neutralize alien forces, Barthes further suggests, bourgeois ideology transmogrifies into an original, thereby producing the myth of an 'unchangeable nature'. In so doing, 'the bourgeoisie transforms the reality of the world into an image of the world, History into Nature', thus emptying reality of history and filling it with the notion of nature.¹⁴ In the context of *Blade Runner*, we might say that by creating androids, the Tyrell Corporation has assimilated human diversity, and, with it, the possibility of social upheaval, into replications of human obedience. In a world and a reality seemingly without natural environments,¹⁵ this creation assures that the process of history is replaced by a contrived progress of nature, and, in turn, that only the natural (the human) can contain a history. This is the crux of human self-repression and android oppression in the film.

But when Roy and his fellow-replicants 'fall' to earth, they do not descend into humanity, but rather challenge its constitution by the mere fact that they embody all the elements of what has been repressed. Above all else, the replicants' increasing consciousness culminates in an autonomy their human superiors surrendered long ago, and which is embodied by Roy's misquotation of Blake's words. The fact that Roy utters them both as an ironic memorial to his mutiny and as a prelude to what's to come implies very strongly that he is exerting his autonomous will by appropriating an event in human history in order to shape his own history and future. Whoever directed him, in other words, would have programmed him to quote poetry correctly -- by affecting fallibility, Roy's misquoting suggests that he is willfully attempting to shed his status as a perfected mechanism manufactured to maintain the repressive mimicry of history as exclusively natural. In so doing, he alters an 'image of the world' into a revision of nature based on personal history. Shapiro has noted that the utterance is an instance of Roy's 'subtle manipulations of the discursive spaces that control meanings'.¹⁶ This underscores the suggestion that the discourse of an unchangeable nature can be used to legislate a particular history. Further, it suggests that Roy is very much aware of the paradigmatic construction he has been created to maintain.¹⁷

But the creative misquotation has a further resonance, because the narrative of *Blade Runner* itself is essentially about a point of transit, simply a moment in the regeneration from simulacrum to self-conscious individual, and from labouring property to autonomous subject. The assertion of such autonomy is highly evocative of the Fall of Adam and Eve, made more so, surely, by Batty's and thus the film's use of the word 'to fall' itself. The Fall of the Old Testament has been linked, especially since the Romantic movement, to autonomous will and a rejection of an extraneous plan. As John A. Phillips reminds us, for writers such as Schiller and Kant, the Fall represents an enormously productive moment in the history of civilization -- the *felix culpa*.¹⁸ The Fall is 'happy' because with autonomy comes the capacity of causing and shaping one's existence, and because it engenders the democratic assignation of each individual's equality.

This allusion to the Fall and the Old Testament may also imply that the return of the repressed is a confrontation with a mythical, perhaps even primeval, realm, as might be ascertained from the Director's Cut sequence of the unicorn. When Deckard dreams about the unicorn, he dreams of a fabled and rare nature based upon mythology. While this perplexing scene has been taken as a metaphor for Rachel's uncertain future, and as a suggestion that Deckard is the sixth replicant¹⁹, it seems equally likely that Deckard recognizes his hunt for the replicants as a catalyst for the extinction of a species threatened with an already precarious existence. Yet by assuming this existence himself when he flees with Rachel, he not only forges new ground, he also embraces a mythological, even prelapsarian, aspiration for humanity. In *Blade Runner*, true to the counter-culture that informed much of Philip K. Dick's 1960s original, going forward entails going back.

For all its futuristic imagery, and because of its transparent approach towards progress as regeneration, *Blade Runner* deals in conventional and archetypal configurations, which constitutes the second, and perhaps more substantial, of the two themes arising from the film's motif of regeneration. Even though the film is radical to some degree -- in that it allows the replicants to form the foundation of Deckard's eventual aspirations -- it fails to find an entirely new direction for its final couple to take. Instead, it seems to mirror the historical vacuum America appeared to inhabit during the 1980s. Despite the fact that the replicants transform the notion of a superior and regulative nature into their own personal history, the film seems to reinstate a foundational and utopian new world as the New World's telos. The retrogressive position of this utopian world (or, at least, the promise of it) somewhat undermines the film's otherwise radical exploration of the possibility of an emerging fusion of nature and technology.

The utopian aspect of myths of regeneration seems to be at its most optimistic in late twentieth-century reconfigurations of the myth of the American Frontier, where both idealized origin and desired destination are interdependent and constantly on the threshold of attainment.²⁰ As Richard Slotkin points out in *Gunfighter Nation*,

*[a]lthough myths are the product of human thought and labor, their identification with venerable tradition makes them appear to be products of 'nature' rather than history.*²¹

This goes some way to explaining why 1980s narratives so often evoke the frontier myth in response to the historical fact of America's 'loss' in Vietnam. The reality of America's involvement in Vietnam and its aftermath has effectively been revised to correspond with how events should ideally have transpired. America's image of itself is rooted in a myth of nature, within a framework of a 'venerable tradition' of paradisiacal magnificence. In this sense, the myth of nature replaces the reality of past events by reclaiming America's innocence and moral righteousness from the peril of depravity. Because the ideal state posited by the myth is never quite attained, the myth is reiterated in popular culture during the 1980s as an ongoing replay of America's mythologisation of Vietnam, particularly, though by no means exclusively, in intergalactic utopian science fiction, such as Lucas' original *Star Wars* trilogy, as well as the *Star Trek* movies of that decade.

As Slotkin observes elsewhere in his book, the 1980s saw Ronald Reagan becoming 'the chief spokesman for a revisionist history of Vietnam', which was reflected by the concentration of Hollywood genre-films on the 'captivity formula' that linked them to 'the most basic story-form of the Frontier Myth', while 'their obsessive repetition of the rescue fantasy makes them seem like rituals for transforming the trauma of defeat into symbolic victory'.²² While it would be difficult to claim that *Blade Runner* is either a movie that consciously perpetuates America's cult of Vietnam or even that it is a nostalgia film of the sort described by Fredric Jameson's 1982 essay 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society',²³ it contains significant elements of the Frontier myth in its allusion to a New World in which, as one of the film's many billboards advertises, 'to begin again'. With its involvement in such mythology, it does share one aspect of the nostalgia film, in that it represents what Jameson calls 'an alarming and pathological symptom of a society that has become incapable of dealing with time and history'.²⁴ Thus, whether one chooses the Director's Cut's uncertain future, or the original release version's escape into ecological paradise, each represents a utopian aspect of the regenerative motif that is radically subversive of the elements

that constitute living beings and their rights *and* as conventional as Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden.

With their escape, Rachel and Deckard leave behind the regulated programs for which they were destined, to enter the unknown, a new world in which to 'begin again'. Reminiscent of Mary Shelley's monster's intention to leave for the 'vast wilds of South America',²⁵ Deckard's and Rachel's flight represents the potential for the realization of a new beginning. The compound effect of Deckard's union with Rachel in a new world and the original film's departure into the American wilderness means that Deckard can easily be read as an allusion to the American Adam. America, as it has popularly been depicted, is both subject and host to the notion of a New World. As R.W.B. Lewis has claimed, America was 'not the end-product of a long historical process...it was something entirely new'.²⁶ Thus, as Blake's poem has already suggested, America was not a climactic conclusion to a chapter in European history, but a new beginning altogether. As Lewis continues,

*[t]he new habits to be engendered on the new American scene were suggested by the image of a radically new personality, the hero of adventure: an individual emancipated from history.*²⁷

Blade Runner's ideal of creating an entirely new history (based on a merging of human and android existence) is particularly evocative if read as a reworking of the notion that America represented the possibility of becoming emancipated from previous (human) history. In this case, Deckard is this new history's first man.

The pattern this reading refers to is an inherently contradictory one, that is, the idea that a new history can install an archetypal, Adamic figure is fraught with paradox. As Lewis has famously encapsulated the problem, the notion of primitive Adamic perfection and progress toward perfection were

*current, and they overlapped and intertwined. On the whole, however, we may settle for the paradox that the more intense the belief in progress toward perfection, the more it stimulated a belief in a present primal perfection.*²⁸

Although Lewis is speaking of the nineteenth century, his statement could equally be applied to the twentieth, at least where America and the perpetuation of its central national mythology were concerned. The dynamic created by the juxtaposition of the old with the new, of a New World that is also ancient, is why *Blade Runner's* connection of Deckard with the first

man in a new world to Adam in the garden of Eden virtually guarantees that the original film's utopian ending will transport its protagonists to a destination derived from origins.

Yet even the Director's Cut of 1992, shorn of the pastoral ending and much more ambiguous than its predecessor, conveys elements of origin and destination myths, and, through them, alludes to the myth of the New World as the earthly paradise. The endings of the two versions are of equivocal significance insofar as, in each, Deckard and Rachel are still symbolic of the concept of a first man and woman, or rather, of a man and woman who will represent the first of their kind at their destined terminus. The inclusion in the Director's Cut of a scene picturing a wild and unbridled unicorn (and its echo in Gaff's origami figure) brings a further coherence to this, less conspicuous, aspect of the film's Edenic motif. Ridley Scott has stated that the scene was filmed prior to *Legend*, his next film after *Blade Runner*,²⁹ and it is useful, as Philip Strick has done, to take note of its unicorn theme. *Legend's* 'opening titles,' Strick says, 'explain that "light is harboured in the soul of unicorns... They can only be found in the purest of mortals"'.³⁰ In an interview with Paul Sammon, Scott has claimed that what he finds interesting in *Blade Runner's* unicorn scene is that

*while so much has been made by critics of the unicorn, they've actually missed the wider issue. It is not the unicorn itself which is important. It's the landscape around it - the green landscape - they should be noticing.*³¹

Gaff's tinfoil unicorn origami, Scott elsewhere explains,

*visually links up with [Deckard's] previous vision of seeing a unicorn. Which tells us that [Gaff] A) has been to Deckard's apartment, and B) is giving Deckard a full blast of his own paranoia. Gaff's message there is, 'Listen, pal, I know your innermost thoughts. Therefore you're a replicant. How else would I know this?'*³²

What Scott seems to be saying is that unicorns are a type of electric sheep, and that the dream of unicorns is an android program. Both unicorns, Deckard's and Gaff's, are constructions, of either sub-conscious daydreams or tin-foil paranoia, yet if it is the landscape that should be heeded, then nature, not pre-determined genes, nor history, becomes the determining factor for the context of the unicorn. In other words, Deckard's and, to a lesser degree, Gaff's unicorns take on the function of the 'nature' construct and its multiple meanings. Since the unicorn's mythological framework is built upon the symbolism of folklore and Christianity, its correspondence to

nature in *Blade Runner* implies that the concept of nature may be assigned a similar metaphorical implication.

Given the motif of the inception of a new existence by two unprecedented living beings, the metaphor of nature (via the unicorn) clearly conveys a strong allusion to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, but also to the emergence of new frontiers, such as the discovery of America, which led Christopher Columbus to believe he had found the earthly paradise. While Columbus was convinced that America was 'the point of the earthly paradise, whither no one can go but by God's permission',³³ he was also, according to Joseph E. Duncan, one of the last to hold the belief that paradise was an attainable geographic destination.³⁴ Nevertheless, the idea of America and its inhabitants held sway in the Old World as proof of purity, of a first state. As Duncan says of the eighteenth century, 'to many, the American Indians seemed like figures from a prelapsarian age'.³⁵

Mention must at this point be made of Scott's 1992 release *1492: Conquest of Paradise*, a telling indication of his recurring concern with the experience of new frontiers. The discovery and penetration of frontiers variously conceived is arguably one of Scott's more prominent concerns (e.g. *Alien*, *Thelma and Louise*, *G.I. Jane*), but it is most clearly represented by *Blade Runner* and *1492*. That is, both films deal with the confrontation of authoritarian orthodoxies and primitive simplicity, and with the shift that occurs in the existence of the former at the expense of the latter. It is interesting that Philip Strick, another commentator to have noticed the connection, claims that 'if Ridley Scott's Columbus...is to be really understood, the clues, not surprisingly, are to be traced among his predecessors [such as] the space-traveled replicants of *Blade Runner*'. He goes on, 'speaking for them all, Columbus identifies an "unexplored Eden, the chance of a new beginning"'.³⁶ Although I think that Strick is mistaken in his analogy of Scott's Columbus with *Blade Runner*'s replicants, I concur that there is a startling similarity in the films' (meta-)physical geographies as means of transcendence and renewal. The parallel might thus be more accurately made between Columbus and Deckard, because the focus of 'new beginnings' is on regenerating the old (recall, for instance, the electronic billboard's promise of giving humans 'the chance to begin again in the New World', and of enabling them to acquire their own 'Best Future'). To become new, it is necessary to go back to a first state from whence to begin again, but it is also necessary to be confronted with a counterpoint, be it the Taino of *1492*, or the replicants of *Blade Runner*.

The confrontation with one's counterpart is a cathartic experience in American mythology; for instance, it can inspire, as Slotkin has famously elucidated it elsewhere,³⁷ the belief in 'regeneration through violence'.

Through violent combat with Roy and final acquisition of a replicant history, Deckard regenerates himself as a new man. By crossing over and merging with his counterpart, and by ultimately abandoning the violence that partly precipitated his regeneration, Deckard is reminiscent of much of the mythology surrounding the concept of the American Frontier and its archetypal hero. In Slotkin's words, the hero must

*experience a 'regression' to a more primitive and natural condition of life so that the false values of the 'metropolis' can be purged and a new purified social contract enacted.*³⁸

In this sense, Deckard's and Roy's dueling combat in the final scenes can be read both as references to the Eurocentrically regenerative clash between settlers and 'Indians' and to much of Hollywood's imagery of the US soldier's immersion in the customs of a 'primitive' Indochina (such as those depicted in *Apocalypse Now* and *First Blood*). By submerging Deckard in replicant existence in order to 'purge' him, and by including the painting of Roy's body with blood and his war-hungry howls, the film engages with both of these American mythologies. That is, because they are roughly positioned as 'civilized' and 'savage' in the film's final scenes, Deckard and Roy play out the drama of each of these mythologies. Further, because both the 'Indian' and the Vietnam soldier are visually invoked,³⁹ the Vietnam myth and the myth of the American frontier are collapsed into the basic principle that 'every American frontier presupposes the threat of Indians'.⁴⁰

Deckard, as well as Scott's Columbus, can thus truly be said to become regenerated by experiencing 'a "regression" to a more primitive and natural condition of life so that the false values of the "metropolis" can be purged'.⁴¹ If the replicants of *Blade Runner* and the Taino of *1492* can be viewed on equal terms as being the transcending and regenerative counterpoints to the Europeans of the Old World, then, surely, it is possible to read the replicants as those 'American Indians [who] seemed like figures from a prelapsarian age'.⁴² After all, it is the replicants who enable Deckard's regenerated return to what can be described (in relation to both the 1982 and the 1992 versions of the film) as a frontier opening out onto a New World Garden. Yet because *Blade Runner* evokes such Edenic resonance, and because of its dynamic between radical change and the recrudescence of archetype, such a reading is inherently tenuous due to the tension that inheres in the notion of *returning* to Eden.

With their escape, Rachel and Deckard represent that most fundamentally American project, the exploration of a New Frontier. As ever, while the possibility of an Edenic utopia is deeply revolutionary, it is also extremely conservative because it entails a reversion to a long-established archetypal

model. Yet key statements such as Roy's enigmatic misquotation strongly convey the implication of a radical change of perspective in experiencing precedents. For humans to experience regeneration, therefore, they must alienate themselves into replicating otherness. To reach Eden in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* it is clearly necessary to go off course.

ENDNOTES

¹ Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *Blake, Complete Writings*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1972, p. 200, plate 11, lines 1-2.

² William James Gibson, *Warrior Dreams: Paramilitary Culture in Post-Vietnam America*, Hill and Wang, USA, 1994, p. 26.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁴ Albert Auster and Leonard Quart, for instance, go on to detail the Reagan/Rambo connection thus: 'Reagan first referred to *Rambo* in an angry polemic against a group of Arab terrorists who had hijacked a U.S. passenger plane in the Middle East ("Boy, I saw *Rambo* last night; now I know what to do next time"). Later, in his drive to get Congress to enact tax-reform legislation, he said, "In the spirit of *Rambo*, let me tell you we're going to win this time"', Albert Auster and Leonard Quart, *How the War was Remembered: Hollywood and Vietnam*, Praeger, New York, 1988, p. 107]

⁵ Robin Wood, *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, p. 185.

⁶ The question of intentionality arises here. Screenwriter David Peoples recalls, 'I'd done a scene where Batty discovers that the Tyrell he kills isn't the real one (...) somewhere in that scene I'd slipped in a reference to a poem by Shelley called "Ozymandias". Now, Ridley is a culturally alert guy. He said, "That's good. There ought to be reference to Blake, too. Let's give that to Batty.'" But I'm not a Blake fan -- in fact, I'd never read him before. So I dutifully went out and purchased a book of Blake, came across that "America" poem, rewrote it a bit, and gave the lines to Roy as a piece of dialogue. Which seemed to work; Batty was certainly the type of person who could surprise you', Paul M. Sammon, *Future Noir: The Making of Blade Runner*, Orion Media, London, 1996, p. 134. Scott's reply that there 'ought' to be a reference to Blake may not be sufficient grounds to conclude that the whole film hinges on its inclusion, yet Scott's 'cultural alertness' suggests that he may well have been aware of the resonance of his reference.

⁷ Originally San Francisco in Dick's novel, the city named after Saint Francis of Assisi, protector of animals.

⁸ Blake, 'America', plate 12, ll. 4-6.

⁹ Frosch calls Urizen 'Reason self-absorbed', whose 'critical authority operates similarly as the dissector of our moral experience, as it accuses our senses and feelings of sin -- that is, departure from its own code -- as well as inadequacy and error'. Thomas R. Frosch *The Awakening of Albion: The Renovation of the Body in the Poetry of William Blake*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1974, p. 35.

¹⁰ Blake, 'America', plate 16, ll. 4, 1, 3.

¹¹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, C.J. Arthur, ed., International Publishers, New York, 1970.

¹² Wood, *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan*, p. 72.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁴ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, Paladin, London, 1980, pp. 141-2.

¹⁵ Notwithstanding the 'nature' ending of *Blade Runner's* original release version.

¹⁶ Michael J. Shapiro, "Manning" the Frontiers: The Politics of (Human) Nature in *Blade Runner*, in: Jane Bennett and William Chaloupka eds., *In the Nature of Things: Language, Politics, and the Environment*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 81.

¹⁷ Indeed, Shapiro says as much when he claims that, of all the characters, Roy 'is the most mindful of the boundary issues involved in a world shared between humans and replicants' *Ibid.*

¹⁸ John A. Phillips, *Eve: The History of an Idea*, Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1984.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Philip Strick's 'Blade Runner: Telling the Difference', *Sight and Sound*, vol. 2, issue 8, December 1992, pp. 8-9.

²⁰ It was, of course, John F. Kennedy who most famously affirmed the idealistic correlation of America's frontier past and its future. The phrase 'New Frontier' was first pronounced in his 1960 acceptance speech as Democratic Party presidential candidate: 'I stand tonight facing west on what was once the last frontier. From the lands that stretch 3000 miles behind me, the pioneers of old gave up their safety, their comfort and sometimes their lives to build a new world here in the West...[But] the problems are not all solved and the battles are not all won, and we stand today on the edge of new frontier – the frontier of the 1960's, a frontier of unknown opportunities and paths, a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats...For the harsh facts of the matter are that we stand on this frontier at a turning point in history'[quoted in Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, Atheneum, New York, 1992, p. 2]

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 649.

²³ Nostalgia films, according to Jameson, are films about the past, as well as films that are ostensibly films from the past [in John Belton, ed., *Movies and Mass Culture*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1996, p. 193].

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p. 141.

²⁶ R.W.B. Lewis, *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1955, p. 5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ See Sammon's interview with Scott in Appendix A of *Future Noir*, pp. 375-93.

³⁰ Strick, "Blade Runner: Telling the Difference", p. 8.

³¹ Sammon, *Future Noir*, p. 377.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 391.

³³ Quoted in Joseph E. Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise: A Historical Study of Eden*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1972, pp. 188-9. Delumeau points out that even 'as late as the eighteenth century, a certain Pedro de Rates Hanequim (...) claimed that the earthly paradise still existed (...) it was in America, therefore, that God created Adam.' Jean Delumeau, *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, translated. Matthew O'Connell, The Continuum Publishing Company, New York, 1995, p. 55.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 270.

³⁶ Review in *Sight and Sound*, November 1992, vol. 2, issue 7, p. 42.

³⁷ Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, Wesleyan University Press, USA, 1973.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁹ Roy could here be seen as either the 'regressed' US soldier (a kind of Colonel Kurtz, Captain Willard, or Rambo), or as the vilified Vietcong of films such as *The Deer Hunter*.

⁴⁰ Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, pp. 646-7.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴² Duncan, *Milton's Earthly Paradise*, p. 270.