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Robert D. Kaplan: An Empire Wilderness Study Guide

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ROBERT D. KAPLAN: AN EMPIRE WILDERNESS
STUDY GUIDE, 2004
Steven Alan Samson

PART I: THE LAST REDOUBT OF THE NATION-STATE

CHAPTER ONE: FORT LEAVENWORTH

Review

Fort Leavenworth
Manifest Destiny
historical role of standing army
reasons for military's professional-caste elite
Morelock on the future of war
Frederick Jackson Turner and the frontier thesis
medievalization of the continent
print-capitalism vs. computer-driven world economy
European vs. American experience
buffalo soldiers
Posse Comitatus Act
imperialism vs. blood-and-soil
antiwar protests
implications of American geography
middle class and urban pods
Edward Gibbon
traditional patriotism
northward migration from Mexico

PART II: THE NEW WILDERNESS

CHAPTER TWO: FORT LEAVENWORTH TO ST. LOUIS

Statistics

LARGEST AMERICAN CITIES (1950)

City	1950		1990		2000	
1. New York City	7,891,957	+/-	7,322,564	+	8,008,278	(1)
2. Chicago	3,620,962	-	2,783,726	-/+	2,896,016	(3)
3. Philadelphia	2,071,505	-	1,585,577	-	1,517,500	(5)
4. Los Angeles	1,970,358	+	3,485,398	+	3,694,820	(2)
5. Detroit	1,849,568	-	1,027,974	-	951,270	(10)
6. Baltimore	949,708	-	736,014	-	651,154	(17)
7. Cleveland	914,806	-	505,616	-	478,403	(33)
8. St. Louis	856,796	-	396,685	-	348,189	(49)
9. Washington	802,178	-	606,900	-	572,069	(21)
10. Boston	801,444	-	574,283	-/+	589,141	(20)
11. San Francisco	775,357	-	723,959	+	776,733	(13)
12. Pittsburgh	676,806	-	369,879	+	334,563	(52)
13. Milwaukee	637,392	+/-	628,088	-	596,974	(19)
14. Houston	596,153	+	1,630,553	+	1,953,631	(4)
15. Buffalo	580,132	-	328,123	-	292,648	(58)

LARGEST AMERICAN CITIES (2000)

City	1950		1990		2000
6. Phoenix	106,818	+	983,403	+	1,321,045
7. San Diego	334,387	+	1,110,549	+	1.223,400
8. Dallas	434,462	+	1,006,877	+	1,188,580
9. San Antonio	408,442	+	935,933	+	1,144,646
11. San Jose	95,280	+	782,248	+	894,943
12. Indianapolis	427,173	+	741,952	+	791,926
14. Jacksonville	204,517	+	635,230	+	735,617
15. Columbus	375,901	+	632,910	+	711,470
16. Austin	132,459	+	465,622	+	656,562

Review

population trends in the largest cities of 1950

CHAPTER THREE: THE AVERAGE AMERICAN CITY

Review

Chicago
evolution of American cities
Dennis Judd on American “individualism”
American worker’s work year
Gilded Age millionaires
St. Louis
origin of gated communities
Alexis de Tocqueville on material prosperity
black flight to the suburbs

CHAPTER FOUR: THE “AMERICAN BOTTOMS”

Review

Morris Hunt on the desolation of East St. Louis
importation of IT graduates from India

CHAPTER FIVE: OMAHA: PLUGGED IN

Review

Omaha and the Union Pacific
foreign policies pursued by heartland cities
maquilladora factories
annexation of suburbs

CHAPTER SIX: AGAINST THE CURRENT

Note

“Sisyphean persistence” refers to the Myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned to having to roll a huge stone to the top of a mountain, only to have it roll down again.

Review

Edmonson Youth Outreach
effects of desegregation

PART III: IN THE FUTURE NOW

CHAPTER SEVEN: LIKE TEHERAN AND SÃO PAULO

Review

California's population growth
Kotkin's urban confederacy movement
Watts and South Central
private security agencies
homelessness in Santa Monica
Zaheer Virji on race relations
Great Mall of China
Gregory Rodriguez on Latinos

CHAPTER EIGHT: ONE OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ECONOMIES

Review

the average commute in Orange County
Dennis Macheski on immigration
Fashion Island Mall
libertarianism
the locus of power
population density of Orange County
Proposition 187
Tocqueville on democracy and despotism
the role played by the car

CHAPTER NINE: LOW-END COSMOPOLITANISM

Review

governing of the United States and Mexico

PART IV: THE AGENT OF HISTORY

CHAPTER TEN: HISTORY MOVES NORTH

Study Questions

1. Why don't Mexicans go to the police for help? What is Xochimilco and how is it governed? How are property rights protected? What is a basic difference between the United States and Mexico? What does the author mean by saying that "history" is moving northward? (109-12)

2. How does the former top government minister characterize the political direction of Mexico? What are some of the realities of geographical Mexico? How does the middle class contribute to this *balkanization*? What are the characteristics of the "party despotism" of the dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)? What does it take to create enough jobs for the growing population? Describe Mexico's erratic route to stability. (112-17)

3. Who cultivates the outdoor cannabis (hemp, marijuana) fields in the United States? What role does Sinoloa state play in drug smuggling? How do the profits of the cocaine traffic compare with Mexico's large petroleum industry? Who dominates the local drug trade? (117-20)

Review

United States and Mexico: basic differences
Mexico's party despotism
Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)
geographical Mexico and disunity
real unemployment and economic growth needs
Sinoloa, petroleum, and drug smuggling

CHAPTER ELEVEN: IN SEARCH OF THE NONEXISTENT

Study Questions

1. What does the author mean by saying that the Spanish conquerors lacked the habit of *process*? What did Cabeza de Vaca and Coronado find in their "search for the nonexistent?" (121-23)

2. How is the Mexican ambivalence toward the Spanish conquerors manifested? How does this complicate and dilute the meaning of a state that ultimately grew from the Spanish conquest? (123-26)

3. Why significance does Kaplan find in the shrine for Jesús Malverde, "El Narcosantón?" How it "rebuke" the established aesthetics, such as "the newest poured concrete and tinted glass structures?" What is characteristic of these structures? What are the chief products of Sinoloa? What advantages do Mexican schoolchildren have over many inner city American? How important is the drug trade to the life of Mexico? To the United States? (126-30)

Review

teaching about Mexico's past
multibillion dollar narcotics trade
Cortez and Coronado

CHAPTER TWELVE: UPHEAVALS AND TRANSFORMATIONS

Study Questions

1. What was different about the author's bus ride to the northern border? What kind of instability is bred by success? What has been the social and economic impact of the *maquilladoras*? What is typical of the border area? What are some consequences of the relocation of over 2000 companies in this region? How does this relate to American consumers? What is Nogales like south of the "iron curtain?" In the absence of drugs and illegal immigrations, what might face the United States in the future? What makes Mexico "intractable?" How is the area becoming integrated? What factors account for the different responses of California and Texas to the Mexican challenge? What is significant about the role of Monterrey in the region? (131-37)

Review

maquilladoras and cheap labor
relationship between American consumers and Third World workers
responses of California and Texas to the Mexican challenge

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: ACROSS THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

Review

importance of maintenance

PART V: SEPARATE NATIONS

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: THE FIRST OASIS

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: INDIVIDUALISTS

Review

James Harrington

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: “OUR CULTURE IS GETTING REAL THIN”

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: ARIZONA: A BALKAN MAP?

Review

Apache
Hopi
Papago
Navajo

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: HOPI SILENCES AND THE LAND OF AWE

Review

kachina dolls
Kit Carson
kivas
John C. Frémont

CHAPTER NINETEEN: VETERANS DAY

CHAPTER TWENTY: ON STAGE IN SANTA FE AND TAOS

Review

adobe
Georgia O'Keefe
Willa Cather
Carl Jung
Mabel Dodge (Luhan)
D. H. Lawrence
Thomas Wolfe

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: THE GREYHOUND UNDERCLASS

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: A DESERT CULTURE

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE: THE DRY-LAND SEA

PART VI: THE NEW EMPIRE

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: IMPERIAL OUTPOST AND THE SMALL TOWN

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: THE NEW LOCALISM

Review

spring flooding and dams

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX: AN EMPIRE WILDERNESS?

Review

Abraham Lincoln on war and the land
Theodore Roosevelt
Gentrification
liberals and conservatives
uniting the elite
environmentalists
Thomas Jefferson
James Madison

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN: CANADA: THE WILD CARD

Review

national character

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT: VANCOUVER: TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY PATRIOTISM

Review

characteristics of Vancouver
Pacific Corridor Enterprise
tabula rasa
I-5 Main Street
Cascadia

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE: TOWARD CATHAY

Review

Oregon Trail
high tech
redlining
Willamette Valley
urban growth boundary
view corridors

VII: THE MEANING OF VICKSBURG

CHAPTER THIRTY: HISTORY IN THREE DIMENSIONS

Review

Walt Whitman
temporariness of American civilization
how nations abide
.