

# THE LOOK OF HISTORY – NEW YORK AFTER 9/11



So just as I was finishing my short comment today about [images and the physiognomy of history](#) [Link]

under the question – [what does historical change look like?](#)

Al Bergesen (in Tucson) sent me this picture of the New York Skyline





... my son is a photographer and took the attached image of the NY skyline. When I saw it I thought about how we see NY after 911, or maybe even more generally given the rise of China and the skylines emerging there.

Here is my thought: most images of NY are still of tall buildings; still full of energy, etc. Fine. That is still NY. But there is also a sadness about the city that is not captured in the traditional image. NY after

the shock of 911 + the rise of East Asia and its now tallest buildings in the world is part of a world historic transition from North America to East Asia and this photo captures some of the sense of the recession or decline of the US vis ? vis the rise of bustling Asia/China.

There is also a sadness here; a slipping away of the centrality of NY and its skyline. But there has been little photographic honesty about this social fact. We are all in photographic denial about the status of NY. We, like Bush, are full of the bluster of a NY of the past, and not the sadness and shift to Asia that is, in fact, the overwhelming reality of the 21st. century.

...

"NY drifting into memory", was the caption I thought of when I saw it. Such distance; sadness; recession from centrality. Many won't like that. Fine. But it would be fascinating to see the emotions that this particular image of the NY skyline will illicit.