

EDITORS NOTES:

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This issue of AEER offers a wide ranging and complex collection of articles that I have enjoyed putting together. It may be that after twenty-five nights of bombardment in Yugoslavia I find myself full of opinions, but I discern a higher sense of critical engagement in this particular set of articles than of any previous set in my six years as editor of this newsletter. I want to thank Nancy Ries, Matti Bunzl and Eva Huseby-Darvas for their help with the issue. We have begun a process of collective editorship that worked out very nicely on its first go-round. Nancy is pulling together the Autumn issue. If you have something you want submit, please contact her directly. We intend to alternate responsibility for the Spring and Autumn numbers next year too. Matti will be happy to take your offers to review books.

The web-site is being enhanced. I am moving it from a UNIX to an NT to a new server that gives me greater control over some interactive features that I want to install. Please take note of the new address: LAS1.Depaul.edu/aeer. These interactive features include an email directory of those members for whom I have an email address. Please check out this feature. If your name isn't there, send me the email address and I will update it immediately. The list also has room for you to indicate your country/region interests and research topics. This should make communication between us faster. If you don't want your email listed, let me know. Even if you do not want your password published, I need to have it. I want to establish an email mailing list to contact you more quickly and cheaply between mailings of the newsletter, without having to go through H-SAE. Eventually, you will have the option of receiving the newsletter in electronic form if you wish. There is also an updated membership list. If your name is not on this list, it means you haven't paid dues in the past two years. We are very forgiving about this. Send me a check for this year and you will be reinstated. This list purposefully does not give contact information. I prefer to keep those lists separate. Eventually, the membership list will be in a secure area that will include access to the most current articles from AEER and will require a password. There will be a cooperation page. You will be able to submit a request to the page and it will remain on for the period of time you specify. At the same time, a message will go out to

the membership email list informing them that there has been an addition to the cooperation page and who it was from. At the annual meeting in November, we also decided to try a picture (still and video) and sound gallery. I am happy to receive any images or sounds you would like to offer the public as a way of helping to educate the eye and the ear to both the distinctiveness and the universality of the people you encounter in your fieldwork. Send your file(s) together with the appropriate caption(s) to me by email and I will mount them in the new Gallery.

I mentioned above that I feel myself more opinionated than usual in these troubling days. I have been moderating a series of panels of colleagues to inform our university community about the historical, cultural and geo-political realities of the Yugoslav conflict. I am sure many of you are doing the same thing. I do so only a few weeks after the death of my teacher and friend Eric Wolf, who instigated the first teach-in on Vietnam at the University of Michigan. *Peasant Rebellions of the 20th Century* formed around the Vietnam chapter that itself grew out of the research he did to understand Vietnam. That book and that chapter continue to teach us that things in war are seldom what they seem. This critical view of our contemporary world is his lasting legacy to us. Caught up as we are in worrying about the fate of colleagues, relatives and friends in Serbia, Kosovo/a and Montenegro, we forget Wolf and argue the pros and cons of the tactics of the various leaders.

In that spirit of Eric Wolf, let me humbly suggest that things are not what they seem in Yugoslavia. This is not the last war of the 20th century. Rather, it is one of the first wars of the 21st century. The geo-political structures under which it is being waged are brand new. They did not exist before 1989. The growth of transnational organizations of capital, of information, of human rights, of commodity regulation, and of security has been unprecedented in the last ten years.

Labor is more fully internationalized than it has ever been. With this internationalization of labor comes the need to protect labor from local appropriation or destruction (human rights). Globally distributed investments require protection of distant factories from pilfering and supply flows need guarding from

theft (security). Distant employers with operations in different states need open information about local banking practices and national accounting standards that affect the currencies through which labor is remunerated and investment is monetarized (transparent information flows). Producers and consumers alike need protection of patents and copyrights from piracy and fraud (commodity regulation). For brevity sake, let's call these interrelated organizations, the forces of transparency.

We are at war in Yugoslavia because the forces of transparency need a victory over the forces of national sovereignty. Without a victory, the forces will be held hostage at some point in the future to the resistance of national political organizations. With a victory, the forces can more effectively use the threat of bombardment to force states to fall into line. What is at stake here is the very future of the global regime. The potential winners are all those stakeholders in the various transnational organizations, some of which appeal to progressives (human rights, commodity regulation) and some of which appeal to conservatives (security, capital). This explains the broadening base of support for the war in among the advanced capitalist states.

This opportunity to score a victory and assert its program of transnational domination came about because of a predictable conflict of interest between the national leadership of Yugoslavia (and of Iraq, in an earlier and quite similar conflict), and the forces of transparency. The national leadership in Yugoslavia is the product of a coalition of local authorities who operate according to political rules that were legitimate in the eyes of most Yugoslavs. The national mythos was merely one theme in this legitimation. A second, and more broad-based claim, was the European mythos, the notion that the post-Bosnia Conflict Yugoslavia was the last bastion of the progressive socialist tradition in Europe. Even now, the Yugoslav dis-information campaign routinely characterizes the West's motivation in persecuting the war as ultimately based on Yugoslavia's willingness to resist the forces of global capital.

From their point of view, Yugoslav authorities had everything to lose and nothing to gain by allowing the principles invoked at Rambouillet to go forward. That treaty was not only about Kosovo. It was about new limits on national sovereignty and the concerted undermining of the principles of self-determination that have been in place throughout this century, even if these were more often honored in the breach.

From this point forward, win or lose, the forces of transparency have declared their intention of subordinating the principle of state sovereignty to "higher" principles of transparency. The nation-state is now a barrier, rather than a bulwark, to further development of globalizing labor. It must be transformed. Yugoslavia shows that the authorities that have benefited from the sovereignty of the nation-state will not give it up quietly.

The irony here is that no state, and certainly not the states allied against Yugoslavia, is immune from the pressure to live up to these loftier, and in most cases, suspect regimes. My guess is that whatever the outcome in Yugoslavia, there will be more wars of this sort in the next few decades. I would not be surprised if the entire 21st century was not riddled with one war after another in which global forces allied to unseat and sanitize national authority in favor of leadership that more compliant to the global regime.