Editor's Introduction

This issue of JFS extends our regular staple of articles with a special section on the War in Iraq and Beyond. The eight essays examine the war discourse and the limits it sets.

The opening essay, by Wendell Bell, explores the impacts of 9/11 on the USA. Bell considers the effects on domestic policy-including less tolerance for dissent, threats to civil liberties, neglect of social problems, incompetence of America’s critical infrastructure-and, in terms of America’s approach to foreign policy, the rise of policies of pre-emption, a lack of regard for world opinion, the righteous and simplistic use of the rhetoric of evil to demonize others, the rise of a new American imperialism, American tolerance of state-initiated violence on the part of Israel, and the role of American fundamentalist Christians in welcoming violence in the Middle East. He also considers the undue influence of American corporations on government policies, the rising costs of American unilateral action, and an increase in hate crimes in America against people from the Middle East.

Bell argues that Americans must speak out, strongly and courageously, against these outrages: "I hope we Americans will give voice to our basic decency and stop the unilateral and unethical actions of our government; that we will demand that our American leaders learn to respect the opinions of other nations and to participate as equal partners in the multilateral negotiations and joint actions of the international community."

James Dator asks how this dystopia came about, discerning three factors. First, the political economy of the media, particularly the role of the American media in creating patriotic hysteria. Second, the combination of the obsolete nature of the nation-with the belief that it is permissible, indeed right, for the sovereign state to use deadly force against, as well as in defense, of its citizens. And finally, the American educational system: the de facto pro-war status quo continues to dominate each and every university. Dator dreams of recreating the University of Hawaii as the University of Peace as part of a reconstruction of the USA.

Roar Bjonnes, too, dreams of a different future, a different world governance system and a different future for Iraq: "A 'free Iraq' must ... not only mean the political freedom to vote, but also freedom from poverty, and the freedom to choose the path of economic self-sufficiency. A truly liberated people should be able to exercise both political and economic democracy. Most of all they should feel secure that no foreign economic power can dictate their economic future-that they are not victims of the 'dictatorship' of foreign economic powers."

For him, securing Iraq's future requires challenging current practices of globalization. Quoting Ken Wilber, Bjonnes writes: "My own belief is that, in the coming century, we will see the present United Nations peacefully replaced by the first move toward a genuine World Federation, driven particularly by threats to the global commons that cannot be handled on a national level (such as terrorism, global monetary and economic policy, and environmental threats to the global commons)." Essentially Bjonnes calls for the dreaming of a future world-an alternative world.

It is of this alternative that Galtung wrote before the War on Iraq began. "[These conflicts] can all be solved by governments, building on successful governmental diplomacy after the Second World War. A Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East, CSCME, modeled on the Helsinki Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE, 1973-75. The initiative was taken by a small country, Finland, the veto making the UN inadequate. Today Germany could take the initiative, or, even better, the EU. Participants would be Middle Eastern/West Asian countries, with Germany/EU as facilitators, and the dialogue/conference would last years. Iraq, Kurdistan and Israel-Palestine would be on the agenda."

Of course, his alternative peace solution was not the path taken. But along with Galtung’s peace alternative there is a sting-Galtung calls for the boycott of USA products in response to its fascist behavior.

Tony Judge investigates USA imperialistic behavior, the behavior Galtung calls fascist. In a stunning essay, Judge argues that Eve is ill and Adam has gone off to war.

He writes: ‘Not only has the feminine perspective been repressed, as long-analyzed by feminists, but through that repression 'Eve', in archetypal terms, has become 'ill'. The new, mono-polar geopolitical concept of “America as Empire” can therefore be usefully understood as ‘America as Eve-ill Empire’, suggesting the existence of an ‘Axis of Eve-ill’ states-as psychodynamic counterparts to the ‘Axis of Evil’
rogue states. The 'illness' may be understood as a pathological inability to deal in a healthy manner with those of different values and ways of knowing—the archetypal 'other'—as exemplified for men by their relationship with women and for both by their relationship with their 'shadows'. From such a perspective, concerns with dissidence and terrorism can usefully be explored in terms of 'fear of one's own shadow.'

Dieter Fisher moves from a discussion on USA-Iraq to wars in general, and nuclear weapons in particular. Using a road traffic analogy, Fisher examines how rules and regulations in traffic have made cities safer. Even though there are still some accidents, anarchy has been reigned in. The same is not true for international relations. 'Nuclear weapons have now made international anarchy far more dangerous and obsolete than motor vehicles made anarchy on the road obsolete. It is no longer adequate to wait until war breaks out and then to react with military force. This would be comparable to driving a car with closed eyes, waiting until we hit an obstacle, and then reacting by calling an ambulance. We need to pursue a more future-oriented approach, an active peace policy that seeks to foresee possible conflicts and avoid or resolve them long before they lead to war. What would a security policy based on principles analogous to traffic rules look like? The bulk of his essay explores this alternative world security design.

Agreeing with Fisher, I question the nature of war itself, asking: Does war have a future? I argue that we need to go beyond the litany of personal and inter-state issues, and challenge the military-industrial system that feeds into war, as well as the worldview beneath war-patriarchy, plus evolution, and limited identity. I also offer four scenarios for the future of war: (1) War now, war forever; (2) War becomes contained, ritualized; (3) War disappears; and (4) War transforms, becoming more geneticized and governmentalized. Given these probable futures, what should we do?

My conclusion is that we must remain idealistic about creating a future without war while we act in ways to contain war (peace within, mediation and conflict resolution in our institutions) and participate in the wider struggle against systems and worldviews that create war.

The section concludes with Jon Solomon's essay in which he furthers the arguments by challenging our categories for addressing conflict. Moving away from notions of sovereignty and identity, he explores ways in which to analyze the war in Iraq that do not reinscribe that which we seek to escape. For Solomon, the most worrisome trend is: 'The institution of a permanent state of emergency and the rise of political regimes around the world that associate security with instrumentalized identity—the society of secundify.' Complicit in this is language that reinforces national identity and media that industrializes fear. Moving out of a war system, then, requires far more than better world policy based on categories of either 'State' or 'humanity', but a re-imagination of past, present and future, and the adoption of practices that resist the war/nation-security discourse. Solomon concludes his piece by comparing the War in Iraq with the SARS virus, arguing that both have raised basic issues about sovereignty, human rights, and the use of 'war-health and otherwise'-by government to expand state power, and to limit the possibilities of individuals.

What the essays have in common are the ways in which the war discourse has straitjacketed the future, and how crucial readings of the future that move us outside of this discourse are. Not only must Eve (Gaia) regain her health but Adam must find a way to language the world, and find a new purpose for being.

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