

8-13-1999

Trends. Kosovo: The Latest Reification of Boundaries?

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Recommended Citation

Editor (1999) "Trends. Kosovo: The Latest Reification of Boundaries?," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*: Vol. 7 : Iss. 6 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol7/iss6/3>

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International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. Kosovo: The Latest Reification of Boundaries?

Author: Editor

Volume: 7

Issue: 6

Date: 1999-08-13

Keywords: Boundaries, Kosovo, Political Psychology, Security

Beyond Rambouillet; Serbian and Kosovar Albanian atrocities; NATO bombing; still more atrocities; and attempts to relieve, recover, reconstitute, and invent democracy and multiethnic constituencies, there still remains the Issue of boundaries. Should Yugoslavia still exist? Should it comprise Montenegro and Serbia? Should Kosovo be part of Serbia. Should Kosovo comprise enclaves varying in degree of multi-ethnicity? These questions create and reflect a subjugating discourse that boundaries are necessary, sufficient, or both to engender conflict and that geographical boundaries are the most salient in this regard.

As to the latter, boundaries of mind, spirit, culture, and praxis can transcend mere geography and engender conflict regardless of geography. Moreover, within geographical boundaries mind, spirit, culture, and praxis continually segment, fragment, and coalesce as boundaries within boundaries concurrently transcend geographical boundaries.

As to the former, it seems as likely--if not more likely--that conflict engenders boundaries or may concurrently arise with it. Analysts who espouse boundaries engendering conflict may be committing the fallacy of equating correlation with reciprocal or even "wrong-way" causality.

Kosovo and many other loci of conflict will not be resolved primarily through the "right" geographical boundary setting. Those who posit otherwise may be setting boundaries that a desired peace may transcend only with the greatest difficulty. (See Gastil, R.D. (August 9, 1999). Keep Kosovo whole. *The New York Times*, p. A18; Leventhal, A.G., Wang, Y., et al. (1998). Neural correlates of boundary perception. *Visual Neuroscience*, 15, 1107-1118; Loewenthal, K.M., Goldblatt, V., et al. (1997). The costs and benefits of boundary maintenance: Stress, religion and culture among Jews in Britain. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 32, 200-207; Perlow, L.A. (1998). Boundary control: The social ordering of work and family time in a high-tech corporation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43, 328-357; Sommers-Flanagan, R., Elliot, D., & Sommers-Flanagan, J. (1998). Exploring the edges: Boundaries and breaks. *Ethics & Behavior*, 8, 37-48.) (Keywords: Boundaries, Kosovo, Political Psychology, Security.)