

### **History of the Former Yugoslavia**

In Yugoslavia there were three rather loose groups of people, all descendants of Slavic tribes, but with enormous differences among the various ethnic groups. There were the Slovenes who settled in the north, Croats who settled in the center and west, and Serbs who settled in the southeast. There were frequent conflicts among themselves and with outsiders. Christians in the east spoke Greek and practiced Eastern Orthodox Christianity. Christians in the west spoke Latin and practiced Roman Catholicism. Bosnians in the center were exposed to both.

#### **1200's**

Bosnia was under control of the Hungarian Empire.  
Serbia was ruled by King Stephen Dusan and became powerful.  
Croatia aligned itself with Hungary.

#### **1300's**

Bosnia gained independence from Hungary.  
1376: Stephen Turtko was crowned "King of Serbs, Bosnia, and the Coast".  
1389: Battle of Kosovo: Turks from the Ottoman Empire defeated a united force of Serbs, Hungarians, Albanians, Croats, Bulgarians, and Bosnians.  
1398: Turks invaded Bosnia.

#### **1400's**

Turks controlled Serbia, Bosnia, and parts of Croatia. The Turks were Muslim.

The Serbs remained Orthodox Christians even while under Muslim rule and kept alive the feelings of hatred left over from the Battle of Kosovo. They strengthened their ethnic identity by telling stories of the war and turning soldiers who had died into heroes.

The Bosnians practiced a form of Christianity called Bogomilism, which was not recognized by either the Eastern Orthodox or the Roman Catholics. Many Bosnians converted to Islam.

Slovenia and Croatia remained under the control of Hungary and Austria.

Turkish rule was strong during the remainder of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.  
Despite invasions and foreign rule, southern Slavs retained strong ethnic identities that kept them feeling separate from each other and their rulers.

#### **1800's**

1804: First Serbian uprising.  
1815: Second Serbian uprising.  
1878: Bosnia comes under the control of Austria-Hungary as Turkish power weakens.  
At this time, Bosnians considered themselves more Asian than European.  
Slovenes and Croats identified more with Europe and resented their treatment under the Austria-Hungarian rule.  
Serbs gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire and saw themselves as the traditional leaders in the Balkans. Serbs envisioned gaining land in Bosnia where many Serbs lived and unifying the entire region under self-rule.  
Slovenia and Croatia also had a dream of an independent nation of southern Slavs.

All groups felt hostile toward Austria-Hungary, which still controlled parts of the Balkans.

### **1900's**

1914: *June* Austria-Hungarian Archduke Francis Ferdinand visited Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia to try to ease tensions. An ethnic Serb assassinated him and his wife. Martial law was imposed and tensions mounted.

1914: *July* Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

1914-1918: World War I

1918: Austria-Hungary was defeated.

1918: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) was created. The Kingdom included the states of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and some pieces of land formerly held by Austria-Hungary. There was a democratic parliamentary-style government, which recognized three national flags and three major religions: Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Islam. Peter I was king. Problems persisted among the different groups.

1929: King Alexander, Peter I successor, abolished the constitution and ruled as dictator. He renamed the country "Kingdom of Yugoslavia". He tried to unite the people by ignoring historical boundaries, reorganizing the government, banning political parties, and restricting the press, but these actions only angered the people.

1934: The king was killed by Croatian terrorists. They wanted to create an independent country of Croatia.

1934: Prince Paul took over the rule of Yugoslavia.

1941: Germany invaded Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav army collapsed and the king and government fled. Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria took control of Yugoslavia. Jews and Serbs were murdered by the conquerors.

1945: A Croatian named Josip Broz Tito, and his followers became the new rulers of Yugoslavia and Tito remained in power for the next 40 years. World War II had claimed more than 1.5 million Yugoslav lives. Fellow Yugoslavs had killed a million of them. People did not forget this.

Tito abolished the monarchy, declared Yugoslavia a democratic nation with six republics and two provinces. Yugoslavia now became known as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The republics included Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia and the two provinces were Kosovo and Vojvodina. Tito was a dictator. There were executions of war-time collaborators, religious practices were discouraged, criticism of the government was not allowed, the government seized control of land and created farming co-ops. This especially angered the people whose families had farmed the land for centuries.

### **1950's**

Farmers revolted. There was drought and starvation.

Tito abandoned Communist policies and asked the U.S. and Europe for help.

Conditions improved; farmers again worked their own land. Businesses were created and flourished.

1957-1960: Yugoslavia had the second largest economic growth in the world. Health care improved, women were granted civil and political rights, and education was encouraged.

### **1980's**

1980: Tito died.

1980's: There were food shortages, labor strikes, and financial scandals. Prices rose and there were job lay-offs. Each Republic blamed the other. The new government, which rotated leadership among the six republics and two provinces, was not effective.

1989: Communist governments throughout Europe fell.

1990's

Slobodan Milosevic led the Republic of Serbia. He censored news, books, and television. He used troops to control Kosovo and Vojvodina. He wanted the six republics to remain together as a united country. He also wanted to gain control of all parts of Yugoslavia populated by Serbs. Serbs were the most numerous ethnic group in Yugoslavia, over one-third of the population. Milosevic encouraged national pride and instigated ethnic feelings of animosity toward other groups for past atrocities-both real and imagined. He encouraged the radio stations to report imagined threats toward Serbs by Croats and Muslims. People in the other republics began to become concerned with their Serb neighbors. They wondered if they would support Milosevic. Because of this mistrust, citizens of those republics began to make moves to become independent of the Milosevic and Serb-led federal government.

1990 Spring: Croatia and Slovenia held their first free elections. They voted for a multi-party Western-style government.

1990 Fall: Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina also held elections.

The Serb government declared that a breakup could take place only if boundaries were redrawn to make all Serbian-inhabited land was made part of Serbia. This would not happen as Croats and Muslims also lived in the regions and Croatia and Bosnia would have to give up part of their territory.

1991 May: The Serbs blocked a Croat from becoming President of the revolving State Presidency.

1991 June 25: Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia.

1991 June 26: Yugoslav People's Army entered Croatia and Slovenia. Serbs dominated the army. Milosevic allowed Slovenia to secede, but in Croatia there was a problem. Milosevic stated that the Serbs in Croatia were living in danger and sent in federal troops. War broke out.

Bosnia was in the middle of this. They were multicultural, but they had Serbia to the east and Croatia to the north and west. Bosnia had no army or military tradition. Bosnia Muslims began to be discriminated against by their Serb neighbors.

1992: War in Bosnia began in full. The Yugoslav People's Army and Serb forces attacked towns and villages across Bosnia. Their goal was to attack anything that represented Muslim or Turkish influence, to encourage non-Serbs to leave permanently, and to have Serbs take over the region. By June 1992, thousands were dead in Bosnia and over 1.5 million had been forced from their home. By 1992 there were 94 concentration camps in Bosnia for non-Serbs

1993: Warring parties ignored International negotiators.

1994: Jimmy Carter negotiated a cease-fire.

1995: The cease-fire was broken. Serb forces overran Srebrenica, killing thousands of Bosnian Muslims.

1995 November: The Dayton Peace Agreement was signed. U.S. and NATO agree to a peacekeeping force.

1996: Elections were held in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

1997: There was some violence, but the agreement held.

1998: Some refugees have returned. There have been incidents of violence and terror. The Yugoslav army and Serbian police have fought against ethnic Albanian citizens, Muslims make up 90% of the population of Kosovo. Serbs make up only 10% of the population, but they have a strong sense of national identity toward the land.

2000: Fighting broke out between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. NATO peacekeepers struggled to stop the violence. Milosevic was forced to step down as leader and was ultimately arrested in 2001 and charged with corruption and abuse of power. The United Nations International Criminal Tribunal has charged him with crimes against humanity.

**Don't Just Escape a Problem, Shape a Solution: One NBA Star's Efforts to Fight Ethnic Hatred**

Directions: Read the article "Mission Possible". Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. Who is this article about? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is this NBA star's problem or concern? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why does he feel this is an important concern?

4. How did he deal with his problem in the beginning?

5. How did this solution help?

6. What did he decide to do next?

7. How did this solution help?

8. What other people or organizations have offered support and resources to help?

**Don' t Just Escape A Problem, Shape A Solution**

Highlight a quote from the article that deals with the problem of ethnic hatred.  
Write the quote on the lines below.

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You are explaining ethnic hatred to a group of your peers. Clearly state your opinion of ethnic hatred and provide reasons why you agree or disagree with the quote. Share your ideas regarding your solutions for the problem of ethnic hatred. Be sure you have an introduction (the quote), several sentences explaining your reaction to the quote and how you would solve the problem of ethnic hatred, and end with an appropriate conclusion.