

Description of the most important wars, which took place on Balkan territory

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Abstract:

Purpose and Originality: The article is overview of Balkan changing wars. Balkan is historical area of conflict, however there are wars, which should be singled out due to their influence on the territory as well as on the population and political situation in the region.

Method: In the article historical descriptive method is used. We were trying to describe pretexts, causes, courses, endings and consequences of the largest armed conflicts.

Result: We can say that main historical wars in Balkans were Battle of Frigidus River, Battle of Kosovo, First and Second Balkan war, Civil war in Yugoslavia and Kosovo war.

Society: The results should raise the awareness of the nature of the territory as well as increase the understanding of the mixing different influences in the territory of Balkans.

Limitation: Article is leaving out two world wars, due to their different scale and impact on the history, which goes beyond the borders of Balkan.

Keywords : Balkan, war, Ottoman Empire, Yugoslavia, Romania, Serbia, Kosovo.

1 Introduction

There are many specific territories in the world, which pays the biggest attention of the strongest world leaders, which are discussed in world media. But there are some that in today's world may not have the main word during evening's news. One of such, historically very interesting territories is the Balkans. There are many different definitions of the Balkan region. One group of experts has the opinion that Balkan is an area between Sava river and lower Danube river. Others say that Balkan is the area of Yugoslavia territory, which does not exist anymore (since 1991) plus Greece. In any case, most of the territory is populated by different Slavic groups. It is believed that Slavs are very friendly, peaceful, non-conflict nation. However, if they feel endangered, they are able to fight for their truth as hard as no other nations. According to that, history of Slavs is full of conflicts, in which they had to face more powerful entities. Since the first mention about this territory, the area has been affected by huge amount of destructive wars. In this article, we will try to focus on wars, that influenced history of the territory. War and armed conflict is the oldest and most common way of solving problems. Leaders of involved states giving orders to their people to kill the opposite people is the ordinary phenomenon of today's world. Because of this, it seems appropriate to address this topic.

2 Method

As the sources, from which we will draw the conclusions are predominantly books, supported by the articles as well as information provided by the courtesy of Slovak historian Mgr. Dušan

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Halaj, CsC., who was of great support during the preparation of this text. Based on these sources we will try to provide reliable view of the most important armed conflicts in the region. We will concentrate on Battle of the Frigidus river, Battle of Kosovo, fight for the independence of Balkan nations, civil war in Yugoslavia and Kosovo war.

In the first part of the article we will present the definitions of Balkan territory. As mentioned earlier, there are many different definition, thus we will try to define the region for the purposes of this article on our own. And provide short historical overview of the events in the region. In next part we will concentrate on individual conflicts and try to provide comprehensive information.

3 Definition and brief history of the Balkans

As mentioned before, the most common definition is clear - area between Adriatic sea and Sava river, lower Danube river towards Black sea. Second definition is more political one and includes territory of former Yugoslavia and Greece. Third group of scientists made a deal and declared Balkan as an area between Sava and Danube plus the rest of the Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia and Romania. Many people consider Balkan as an area between Adriatic sea and The Black sea. Based on this, it is possible to agree that taking broadest territorial definition can be beneficial. In this manner one can say that Balkan is composed of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Romania, and European part of Turkey. This is also the territory to which we will further refer to as Balkans.

Despite early inhabitation, first stable settlements are dated to about 1200 B.C., when the most advanced Balkan culture, Ilyrian culture fell apart. (Pinteric, 2017) During the 8th century B.C., Balkan was influenced by Greeks with their ancient greek culture. (Pinteric, 2017) In 3rd century, biggest part of Balkan was connected to Macedonian empire after great successes of Alexander the Great. (Pinteric, 2017) Thanks to a spectacular growth of the Roman Empire, after a fall of Macedonia, territory of Balkan became a part of Roman Empire during the 2nd century B.C. During this period, Balkan was divided into several provinces, such as Thrace and Dalmatia, which are well-known until now. (Pinteric, 2017) After the fall of Roman empire and splitting it into Western Roman Empire and Eastern Roman Empire, Balkan became a part of an east part - Byzantine Empire. (Pinteric, 2017) During the 6th and 7th century, we can notice strong wave of migration of Slavic people in this territory. (Pinteric, 2015) After that, Bulgarians mixed with Slavic created first separated Slavic state - the Bulgarian Empire. This empire was later swallowed by Byzantine, but in 12th century, Bulgarians broke free as well as Serbians and Croatians with them (Croatians became later a part of the Hungarian Empire). (Pinteric, 2017) After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, new threat appeared by Turks. Ottoman warriors broke the resistance and defeated defenders. Turkish supremacy lasted for four centuries. (Pinteric, 2017) In 1821, we can see a first attempt to cancel Turkish occupation - Greek war of independence. After Greeks got the independence, Serbians, Bulgarians, Albanians and Montenegrins benefited from the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and got independent too. (Pinteric, 2017) In the end of 19th century, Ottoman empire was so weak they were not able to solve the territorial disputes, so the conflicts between Balkan states started. Serbians and Bulgarians were arguing about

today's Macedonian land, Greeks and Albanians about North Epirus (today's south Albania) and Albanians competed with Serbians for Kosovo. After two Balkan wars, and a World War I., the Austria-Hungary empire fell down and new states were created here - Romania and Kingdom of Serbians, Croats and Slovenians (in 1929 this kingdom changed its name to Yugoslavia). (Pinteric, 2017) Bosnia and Herzegovina was also a part of this kingdom. After the world war II., during the „cold“ war, Balkan states were influenced by Soviet Union, but later after Tito-Stalin split, they became independent. (Pinteric, 2017) During this period, territorial disputes persisted between every state there. When the communism fell down in 1989, national issues between Yugoslavian nations had started. After long and exhausting conflicts and debates, Europe has come to form we know today.

4 Battle of the Frigidus River

One of the first war conflicts which will be analyzed is battle of the Frigidus river. Battle was fought in between 5th and 6th September 394 between Eastern and Western roman empires. This war is also called a war between Christians and pagan religions¹. (Sigurdsson, 2015) Main problem appeared when Constantine became sole Roman emperor in 324. He proclaimed that Christianity is legal and processes, which should penalize the Christian people should be stopped. (Sigurdsson, 2015) Even though the Christian adherents became free, there was still predominance of paganism in Roman empire. Members of Roman senate were against this order. In 380, East Roman emperor Theodosius I. released an edict, that declared Christianity as major religion in both parts - in eastern and in western too. (Sigurdsson, 2015) After this rule, western politicians were trying to restore the belief of the ancient gods. Those people, who disagreed with having Christianity as a major religion, were trying to act against Theodosius. He was former emperor of Eastern Roman empire, but he has right to appoint western officials. (Sigurdsson, 2015) His biggest opponent was a Frank, Arbogast, whose position was supreme military commander of the Western Empire. (Sigurdsson, 2015) Arbogast was not the officer of the territory, he was just a commander to Eugenius - former emperor in the west. (Sigurdsson, 2015) After years of struggling, the civil war started.

Eastern army was not ready, they had to recover from battles against Goths from 378. Because of this, Theodosius's military generals had to proclaim recruitment and conscription. After enormous preparations, eastern army was ready to leave Constantinople in may, 394.(Sigurdsson, 2015) Eugenius decided to centralize his army, so all strategic places, which should have been used as defensive tool against a danger from east were deserted. So the eastern army continues further and further. They finally meet their opponent near the valley of the Frigidus River (today the Vipava River). (Sigurdsson, 2015) Eastern army consisted of Visigoths, Greeks, Syrians and Georgians, while western army consisted of barbarians and Gallo-Romans. It was approximately 50 000 men against 50 000 men. (Sigurdsson, 2015) Arbogast's army was in an advantage after first day, their strategy was more useful. However, the next day, very strong windstorm started, from the east to the west. (Sigurdsson, 2015) Western warriors were no table to fight in these conditions. Wind was so strong that arrows,

¹ Followers of religions other than their own, or the related Abrahamic religions.

which have been shot, were not being able to reach the goal (Sigurdsson, 2015) Luckily, Theodosius was celebrating a victory. Eugenius was executed and Arbogast committed a suicide. Unfortunately, a few months after this victory, Theodosius died.(Sigurdsson, 2015) He divided the empire between his two sons. This battle was the final decline of Greco-Roman polytheism in favour of Christianity over the following century.(Sigurdsson, 2015)

5 Battle of Kosovo

Many historians consider this battle as the most important battle for Serbian nation in their history. (Morvay, 2004) On one side, there was a nation, which after years and years of prosperity had to face big internal problems. On the other hand was Ottoman Empire, hungry, strong empire, which destroyed everything what comes it's way.

The battle had taken place in 1389, specifically on 15th of June. (Morvay, 2004) Situation before the outbreak of the conflict was complicated. During the reign of Stefan Dušan, Serbian kingdom was going through „golden ages.“ (Morvay, 2004) Kingdom was controlling almost the whole territory of Balkan. Unfortunately, in 1355, Serbian emperor often called as „the mighty,“ died. (Morvay, 2004) This was the moment that started a crisis. The kingdom did not stay united, there were many small principalities vying for power (see Picture 1). Busy with non-essential issues, they were ignoring the threat coming from the south. On the lead of Ottoman Empire was very capable emperor Murad I., declared as one of the strongest sultans of all. (Morvay, 2004) He used very rational tactics to subjugate Serbian territories. He was defeating Serbian rulers one by one. (Morvay, 2004) In 1363, after the battle of Marica river, Serbian rulers in Macedonia had to admit Turkish supremacy. (Morvay, 2004) In 1386, during the battle of Niš, most powerful ruler, Lazar Hrebeljanović was defeated. (Morvay, 2004) Even though he fell, he continued in resistance. After this fight, both sides were preparing themselves for the final fight. Lazar realised that if he wants to be successful, he needs to reunite all the territories left, no matter what nation are they. (Morvay, 2004)

The fight took its place during the Vidov dan.² On Lazar side, there were warriors from all over the Balkan - Serbians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Albanians with a little help of units from Hungary. (Morvay, 2004) However, Turkish army was bigger, well-organized and with bigger discipline. Turkish army destroyed its opponent, as the Ottomans used to. They killed almost all people fighting in this battle with no mercy. Warriors of Christian alliance were defeated (see Picture 2). One thing, which can be taken as a „consolation prize“, is that sultan Murad I. died. When everything was lost, one of Serbian commanders, Miloš Obilič, gave up, and he came to sultan with suggestion. He told him that he wants to betray Lazar, but when he came to Murad near enough, he stabbed him with a dagger. (Morvay, 2004) Sad news for Turkish people, but their triumph has not been questioned by anyone. Murad's son, Bajazir finished it and definitely defeated Lazar. (Morvay, 2004) After this, Lazar and all his

² 15th of July, important holiday for orthodox people, especially Serbs.

collaborationists were beheaded. After his death, Lazar Hrebeljanovic became one of the most important people in Serbian Orthodox religion. (Morvay, 2004) Lazar's son, Stefan Lazarovič had to agree Turkish supremacy. (Morvay, 2004) He promised to act like a vassal of Turkey, to pay taxes and to participate in all other expeditions. (Morvay, 2004) Few years later, Serbian army was forced to fight side by side with Ottomans against Zigmund of Luxemburg, Hungarian emperor in the battle of Nikopol. (Morvay, 2004) After this fight, Serbia became a part of Ottoman Empire for 489 years.

For normal people, this battle is just one of many battles, which Turkish leads against their opponents in belief, that they can rule the Europe. For Serbians, this conflict is part of the tradition, there are many of myths and folk songs, which worship Serbians fighting in this war as heroes (Browne, 2000). St. Vitus' day is the day, when Serbians celebrate the greatness of Serbian empire, although they lost in this battle.

6 Fight for the independence of Balkan nations

As mentioned before, in 15th century almost whole Balkan territory was under Turkish rule. Naturally, greatness of the empire like the Ottoman one could not last forever. At the end of the 19. century, empire was becoming weaker and weaker. The idea of independence has become more and more popular. Idea of independence was supported by global powers, but there was no interest of helping Balkan people to live better, there were only private goals (Kallo, 2014) Czarist Russia wanted to access the Black sea Straits and Austria-Hungary was against Turkish cruel methods, so in the interest of public opinion, they wanted to defeat the Ottomans. (Kallo, 2014) Even though new independent states were emerging at the end of 19. century, there was still huge area in Balkan, which was under Turkish rule. Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia became first independent states in Balkan. (Pinteric, 2017), each of them with a different story of getting the independence.

First independent state of Romania - Romanian principality was created in 1859, as a combination of Moldova and Wallachia. (Blyukher, 2005) These two regions broke free from Turks and Russians, which had to leave these territories after the Treaty of Paris. (Blyukher, 2005) Bulgarians got their freedom in 1878, after a stream of events, which happened here. (Nikolov, 2007) Ottomans, who occupied Bulgaria had to leave, because they were defeated by Russian units. (Nikolov, 2007) In Family encyclopaedia of world history (2000) authors proclaimed, that after this conflict, Turks had to admit autonomy of Bulgarian principality and after a Treaty of San Stefano, Bulgarians became independent. Greeks became free after series of independence uprisings. According to authors of Family encyclopaedia of World history (2000) after First Pan-Hellenic Congress from 1821, it was clear, that Greece will become new, free, state. But this was not accepted by global powers. France, Russia and Great Britain accepted the independence in 1830 after the London Protocol. Regarding to Serbia, their process of getting the freedom is connected with uprisings. (Tejchman, 2005) In 1806, Serbians made a deal with Istanbul that Serbia will be autonomous state, but because of Russo-Turkish war, this idea was not applied in practice. (Tejchman, 2005) After this war, Ottomans could focus their anger to Serbians. We can see another try from Turkish side to rule Serbian territory. In 1815, another uprising was

conducted and Serbians announced autonomy again, but still not officially. (Teichman, 2005) Third try was finally successful in 1829. (Teichman, 2005) True independence was finally recognized in 1867, when last Turkish soldiers left Serbia and in 1878, when Congress of Berlin decided so. (Browne, 2000)

Many people thought that conflicts from the end of 19. century are solved and peaceful years were about to come. However, the biggest conflicts were yet to come. When in 1911 Italy defeated Turkey and took their territories, Balkan states realised that they have to do something, because if not, European powers would take all the Turkish territories, including those which were originally part of Balkan states. (Kallo, 2014) After long discussions (since spring 1911 to February 1912), on 29th February 1912 Serbia and Bulgaria under the auspices of Russia signed an agreement³. Both states has made a deal about support against Ottoman Empire and Austria-Hungary too. (Kallo, 2014) In secret addendum, they decided how to split a land of Macedonia between each other and Russian tsar had to decide, how the borders should look like. (Kallo, 2014) Later, Greece and Montenegro joined the treaty and the anti-Turkish group called Balkan league was created. (Browne, 2000) Only Romania stayed aside, because they would have no profit from possible war. (Kallo, 2014)

The war has started in October 1912. (Kallo, 2014) The process was so fast that Turks were defeated in 2 months (see Picture 3). On 3rd December 1912, peace talks between European powers started and Ottoman Empire had to give up territories on Balkan. (Kallo, 2014) In January, there was one more try from new government in Turkey, but it was pointless because their weakened army did not have a chance.

After this treat, members of Balkan league wanted to divide the territories between each other. And here comes the problem. European powers could not agree with the division. For example for Austrians, it was unacceptable that Serbians would take an access to Adriatic sea and none of powers would admit that Bulgaria controls the Black sea straits. (Kallo, 2014) On 30th April 1912, London peace treaty was signed. (Kallo, 2014) During this conference, Balkan had to make a concession. Independent Albania state was recognized and Serbia lost their connection with sea, so the powers got what they wanted. (Kallo, 2014) This conference also established how the borders of Balkan states should look like. (Kallo, 2014)

Despite of the treat, states were still not satisfied with the result. Bulgaria and Serbia still could not make a deal about how to split the Macedonia territory. (Kallo, 2014) The conflict escalated in the end of June 1913, when Bulgaria attacked Serbia because of Macedonia areas and Greece because of Solun territory. (Kallo, 2014) In the beginning of July, Romania and Ottoman Empire joined the side of Serbia and Greece. (Kallo, 2014) Montenegro was fighting with the alliance too. Austria-Hungary and Germany proclaimed themselves as supporters of Bulgaria, because they wanted to weaken the influence of Russia on Balkan territory. (Kallo, 2014) Bulgaria was against big predominance defeated (see Picture 4). During peace talks in Bucharest from 10th august 1913, middle Macedonia, Kosovo and Sandžak have been granted to Serbia and south Macedonia plus west Thrace have been given to Greece. (Kallo, 2014)

³ Treaty of Amity and connection

Romanians got South Dobruža and Ottoman Empire got east Thrace (see Picture 5). This might be a reason why Bulgaria during World war I. joined central powers, because they wanted to revenge themselves.

7 Civil war in Yugoslavia

During 20th century, biggest state department, which was made by connection of many Balkan nations was Yugoslavia. After years of collaboration of Serbians, Croatians, Slovenians, Montenegrins, Macedonians and Bosnians, individual nations started to be dissatisfied. All these acts were influenced by the fall of central communist power resulting in ventilation of political power, which since the communism started could not be ventilated. (Browne, 2000) One of the main reasons of this war was growing nationalism. (Halaj, 2016) Not only the area of Yugoslavia, but area of individual states too, was mix of different religious and ethnical groups. (Halaj, 2016) And all of these groups were feeling oppressed and underrated, they wanted to fight for their better position and gain bigger respect. There was an economical reason too. (Halaj, 2016) Economically developed nations Slovenia and Croatia were unwilling to pay dotations for economically less developed countries - because of this they wanted to leave the federation. (Pinteric, 2017) Serbia, politically stronger, but economically weaker wanted them to stay in federation, because without them, federation would bankrupt. (Pinteric, 2017)

The conflict between Yugoslavia and Slovenia started in 1991. In the end of December 1990 there was a referendum in Slovenia, in which the themes about independence were discussed. (Halaj, 2016) 95% of participating people were for the independence. (Halaj, 2016) In April 1991, idea of making Yugoslavia a confederation was rejected. On 25th of June Slovenian government declared independence. (Pinteric, 2017) All these steps were leading to armed conflicts between Yugoslavian folk army and Slovenian units - a Ten day war⁴. (Pinteric, 2017) Federal army was bigger and with better weapons, but Slovenians wanted to fight on places, which are very hard to reach for federative army, which didn't know the land as good as Slovenians did. (Halaj, 2016) They managed to split federative units to smaller groups and then they forced them to give up one by one. (Halaj, 2016) The fight lasted only for 10 days; 8 Slovenian soldiers, 31 Yugoslavian Peoples' Army troops and 12 civilians/press were killed. (Gerbet, 2004) According to Gerbet (2004), on 7th July, leaders of Slovenian government and Yugoslavian government met in Brioni Island and signed Brioni declaration. All military operations were stopped.

Following the situation in Slovenia, Croatians wanted to separate themselves from the federation too. First free elections were held there in 1990. (Halaj, 2016) The main goal of nationalist movement, which won the elections, was to make Croatia an independent country. Serbia was against the steps of Croatian government, because Serbian minorities living in Croatia had to face human rights valuations, according to Serbian government. (Halaj, 2016)

⁴ Slovenian war of independence, started in 27th of July 1991

After a stream of events the war started. Extremists from both sides started to kill the enemies. (Halaj, 2016) Riots started in Republic of Serbian country, which was mountainous part of Croatia near the border with Bosnians, where people of Serbian minority were living. (Halaj, 2016) Croatians started to build their own army, without any help of Yugoslavian folk army. On 19th of May 1991, there was a referendum about independence of Croatia. Independence was declared 6 days after the referendum. (Halaj, 2016) Month after becoming independent, Serbians occupied 1/3 of Croatia, including Dubrovnik, Šibenik, Zadar and many other big cities. (Halaj, 2016) Croatians from critical areas started to move into inland, because if they wouldn't move, they would have been killed by Serbians. Serbian civilians had to move to border areas too. On 8th October 1991, day after big explosion, which destroyed the parliament building, Croatian parliament cancelled all relations left between Croatia and Yugoslavia in belief that Yugoslavians made the explosion. (Halaj, 2016) Yugoslavians had the opposite view. Conflict continued and Croatians were pushed into a corner. During December, most of the European countries recognized the independence of Croatia. (Halaj, 2016) In January 1992, UN units came to critical areas. (Halaj, 2016) It was the first reaction of west countries against Serbian aggression. Yugoslavian folk units had to leave Croatia. (Halaj, 2016) In 22th may 1992, when Croatia became a member of UN, armed conflict continued much milder. (Halaj, 2016) Croatians with help of Kosovo separatists started to liberate occupied cities. In 1993, a conflict between Croatians and Muslims, who lived in Bosna has begun. (Halaj, 2016) Riots have been resolved by creating a new territory called Herzeg-Bosna - an area, where Croatians living in Bosnia belonged to. (Halaj, 2016) In the beginning of May 1995, Croatian army in cooperation with USA and NATO renewed the original borders, which were the same as Croatia had after the World War II as a part of Yugoslavia. (Halaj, 2016). During the liberations, many Croatians have been charged with terror on Serbian citizens. Later, attacks were thwarted by intervention of US diplomacy. (Halaj, 2016) Few months later, the Dayton Agreement was signed. (Halaj, 2016) Presidents of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia took part in discussion. This agreement ended major riots in the area of Croatia.

Like in Croatia, Bosnians started their fight for independence too. Territory of Bosnia is exceptional, because there are no majorities or minorities living there. (Halaj, 2016) Approximately the same number of Serbians, Croatians and Bosnians - Serbo-Croatian Muslims made the population of this area. According to this, population consisted of Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim religious groups. (Gerbet, 2004) Conflict started after a stream of events in Croatia, when tensions started between ethnic groups. (Halaj, 2016) During the first separate election in Bosnia, coalition of three parties, which included representatives of all ethnicities defeated Communist party of Yugoslavia. (Halaj,2016) Because of this, it was really hard to make the suggestion for division of the country. None of three nations was a minority, so the separation would not bring anything new. On 29th of February and 1st of March there was a voting concerning independence. (Halaj, 2016) Croats and Bosnians were for the independence, Serbians were against. Independence was declared on 7th April 1992, without the presence of Serbians, which were boycotting the result. (Halaj, 2016) In the same day, Serbians proclaimed Republic of Serbia. (Halaj, 2016) USA and

European union recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately. (Halaj, 2016) Month ago, new republic became a member of UN⁵.

War between those three sides was the bloodiest and the most chaotic conflict in Europe after the World War II. (Halaj, 2016) Peace agreements have been violated and UN efforts were pointless. Serbians were more dominant, because they have had better weapons and more people in army. (Halaj, 2016) Serbians started with genocide of Bosnian population. (Halaj, 2016) It was a planned mass execution of Bosniaks. The biggest execution took place in Srebrenica in 1995, when 8000 Bosniak men were killed here (Gerbet, 2004). Unfortunately, International Criminal Court in The Hague named only this event as genocide, many Croats and Bosnians are against this decision, because there were many inhuman acts, which remained unpunished. (Halaj, 2016) Another big tragedy was Siege of Sarajevo. Serbian troops occupied Sarajevo thinking that Sarajevo is the main point for Bosnian army. They closed the Access roads and began the mass killing of non-Serbian people. (Halaj, 2016) Around 12 000 innocent citizens were killed. (Halaj, 2016) In 1993, the Vance-Owen plan was introduced. (Gerbet, 2004) The main idea was to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina to 10 pieces, while each of 3 nations would control three pieces and Sarajevo will be under control of UNPROFOR⁶ and later under control of all three nations (see Picture 6). This plan failed and conflict became more and more intensive. During this rivalry, we can see the first military intervention from NATO since its formation in 1949. (Pinteric, 2017) They shot down Serbian fighter plane above the no-fly zone. (Halaj, 2016)

In March 1994, Bosnians and Croats worked together to sign Washington Peace Agreement, which created common state formation, existing until today - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Halaj, 2016) Number of fighting sides was reduced to two. In April 1995, NATO forced leaders of Bosniaks, Serbians and Croats fighting in this war to stop the aggression and start the negotiations. It's written in Family encyclopaedia of World history (2000) that the war has ended with signing of Dayton agreement which ended up the Croatian conflict too. Final version, which included the solution of situation in Bosnia was signed in Paris, in 14th December 1995. (Halaj, 2016)

These wars took care of extinction of Yugoslavia, which broke up into individual states. Politically, Serbia was proclaimed as the loser. They had to give up the impact on Montenegro, which became a separate state.

8 Kosovo war

Kosovo war was a conflict between Yugoslavian units, which controlled Kosovo and Kosovo Albanian rebel groups, later called Kosovo Liberation Army with air support of NATO units and ground support by Albanian military. (Bacevich, 2001) Geographically, Kosovo is an area in eastern part of Serbia. It includes cities Priština and Kosovo pole, where the fight between the Ottoman Empire and Serbia with allies was fought. (Bacevich, 2001) During the war in

⁵ United nations - organisation, which promote international co-operation

⁶ United Nations Protection Force - first peacekeeping force

Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, this area was kept quiet. IN 1996, rebels began with the destruction of Yugoslavian military bases. (Bacevich, 2001) They wanted to cancel the Yugoslavian supremacy. UCK⁷ was named a terrorist group, according to highest representatives in Yugoslavia. (Bacevich, 2001) Shooting between the leader of UCK, Adem Jashari with his group and Serbian police was so intensive that 60 Albanians died, including 18 women and 10 young men, who did not reach the sixteenth year of their life. (Bacevich, 2001) Conflict continues in many bloody incidents like this. Following the referendum from May 1998, Yugoslavian army and Serbian police started to clean the area. (Bacevich, 2001) They wanted to totally liquidate UCK units. After many bloody clashes, on 23th of September, UN expressed dissatisfaction with acts, which have been done in Kosovo. (Bacevich, 2001) A day later, NATO began to mobilize. (Bacevich, 2001) They wanted to be ready for possible military intervention. Under a threat of limited air strikes, which were approved by The North-Atlantic council, both sides signed a truce. (Bacevich, 2001) This truce did not last long and fight was renewed. (Bacevich, 2001) Massacre of Račak, when 45 Kosovo farmers were taken to a hill and killed, was convicted by the UN Security Council. (Bacevich, 2001) This was the point when NATO decided that conflict could be ended only with introduction of peacekeeping military force under the auspices of NATO (Browne, 2000). This was the only way how to save lives on both sides. In the beginning of February 1999, Secretary General of NATO started to negotiate with both sides about solutions, which could stop the conflict. (Bacevich, 2001) Discussions leaded to a consensus about autonomy for Kosovo, including the possibility of free and democratic elections. (Bacevich, 2001) This consensus was contained in the Rambouillet agreement, which was signed by USA, Great Britain and Albania. (Bacevich, 2001) Yugoslavians supported by Russia did not sign this, because they thought that this agreement violated the sovereignty of Yugoslavia. (Bacevich, 2001) After this, NATO would have to send 30 000 soldiers to new autonomy province inside Yugoslavia to maintain order in here. (Bacevich, 2001) Negotiations were not successful, which meant that military action from the side of NATO would be necessary. Yugoslavia, which was aware of the risk, announced a state of emergency and started a great mobilization of army and sources. (Bacevich, 2001) On 24th of March 1999, NATO started to bomb Yugoslavia. (Bacevich, 2001) Bombing lasted 10 weeks. (Bacevich, 2001) Almost all states of NATO except Greece were involved. (Bacevich, 2001) Their goal was to expel Yugoslavian army from Kosovo and replace them with peacekeeping units of NATO. (Bacevich, 2001) After that, they wanted to return the refugees, who had to leave their homes. (Bacevich, 2001) In April, conflict was drawing to a close. After the attack of air forces of NATO, Yugoslavians had to face 50 000 British ground troops with NATO flag. (Bacevich, 2001) Leaders of Yugoslavia understood, that there is nobody who would defend them, and when even Russia refused to help, they agreed with military forces, but under the patronage of UN, not NATO. (Bacevich, 2001) This step was the basis for the creation of peace agreement between Serbians and Kosovo Albanians. On 10 June, the North Atlantic Council ratified the agreement and suspended air operations. (Bacevich, 2001) On 12 June, the NATO-led KFOR⁸

⁷ Kosovo Liberation Army

⁸ Peacekeeping Kosovo force

began entering Kosovo. (Bacevich, 2001) This act meant the end of great conflict, but problematic situation continued.

9 Conclusion

Every armed conflict, no matter who is fighting, negatively affects mankind history. Unfortunately, Balkan area was an area, which was affected most. For an ordinary person petty disputes cost the lives of hundreds of thousands people. The main reason, why Balkan people were fighting so rough could be the lack of self-realisation. These nations were almost all the time controlled by other states and nations. During the period of Turkish rule, the anger escalated and exploded in 20th century. Who knows, what would happen if the first kingdoms of Balkan nations would have continued to these days.

Conflicts in the end of ninety's were the bloodiest since the World War II. has ended. People were fighting so intensive that they were not interested in loses. They acted on their enemies like they were not humans. At present, humanity is still recovering from massive killings produced from Yugoslavians in belief of keeping the federation alive and from individual nations in belief of freedom, which they deserved.

The role of international organisations and global powers should be to prevent states from such a catastrophic conflicts. Mistake is that during the biggest conflicts in mankind history organizations and global powers concentrated themselves on their own goals, they had their own interest. Because of that they often made steps, which could provoke rivals, which are arguing between each other for some reason. If the main interest of global powers and international organizations will be to protect innocent people and citizens of problematic states, number of destructive conflicts will be much lower.

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Appendix

Picture 1



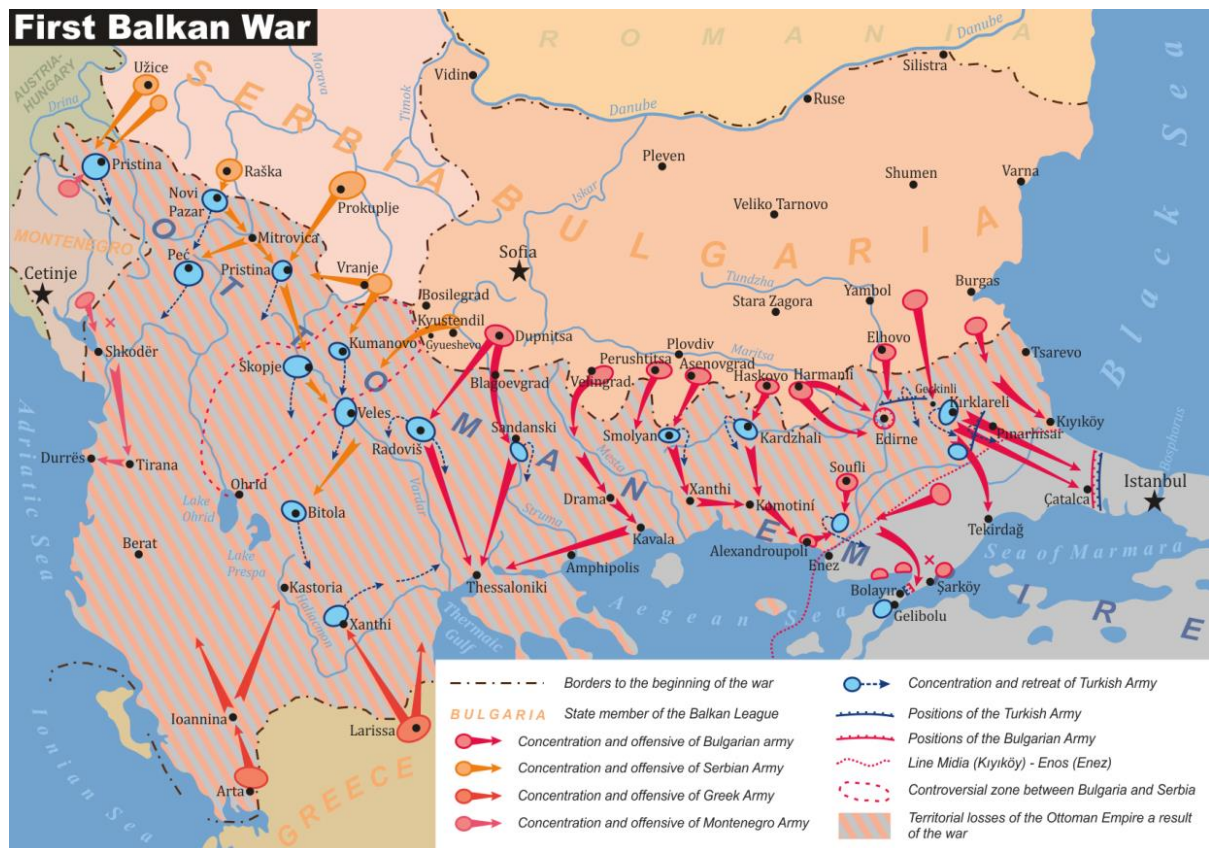
This map shows us how the Balkan territory looked like between years 1273-1295. We can see large number of small kingdoms, on which was Serbian kingdom divided after Stefan Dušan's death in 1355. The most important kingdom, kingdom of Lazar Hrebeljanovic is portrayed with purple colour.

Picture 2



On this Picture we can see, how the fight between Serbians and Ottomans looked like. The battle took place 5 miles from Pristina. Red arrows are showing us the Serbian army and Black arrows the Ottoman army. Lazar's army was defeated and Serbians ended up with Turkish supremacy for almost 500 years.

Picture 3



This Picture shows us how the individual forces of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Montenegro and Ottoman empire were moving during the first Balkan war in 1912. Strategy was really hard to understand and it was no easy to predict steps of the opponent.

Picture 4



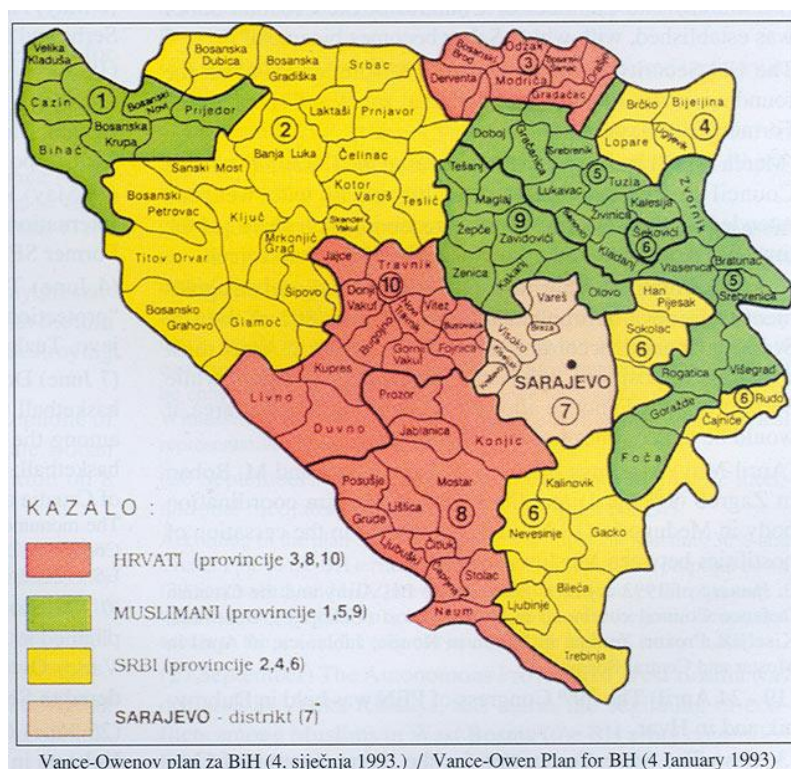
This picture describes the conflict between Bulgaria and anti-Bulgarian coalition during the second Balkan war. Coalition was trying to surround the Bulgarian army and force them to give up.

Picture 5



Here we can see which territories did Bulgaria lose after second Balkan war. Ottoman empire got East Thrace (portrayed with brown), Greece took south Macedonia plus West Thrace (portrayed with blue) and Serbia took middle Macedonia, Sandžak and Kosovo (portrayed with green colour).

Picture 6



This Picture symbolise how the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina should have been divided after the Vance-Owen plan from January 1993.. Red colour symbolise a territory under Croatian control, green symbolise a territory under Bosnian control and yellow symbolise a territory under Croatian control. A district of Sarajevo should have been under control of UNPROFOR.

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