

Turmoil in the Balkans

All questions require at least
THREE sentences on own paper.

PLACES & TERMS

South Slavs Slavic people who migrated from Poland and Russia and settled on the Balkan Peninsula

Slobodan Milošević Serbian leader who tried to increase Serbia's power over the rest of Yugoslavia

ethnic cleansing the policy of violently trying to eliminate an ethnic group

KLA the Kosovo Liberation Army

Vojislav Kostunica reform leader elected president of Yugoslavia in 2000

Roots of the Balkan Conflict

***What** happened at the Battle of Kosovo Polje?*

One conflict in the Balkans is that different groups want control of the same land. The causes of this conflict go back centuries. Starting in the 500s, Slavic people migrated from Poland and Russia to the Balkan Peninsula. They were the **South Slavs**. The South Slavs included Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs. Each group formed its own kingdom.

In 1389, the Muslim Ottoman Empire defeated Serbia at the Battle of Kosovo Polje. The Ottomans began to rule Serbia. They also ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina. Austria ruled Slovenia, and Hungary ruled Croatia. These influences created differences among the South Slavic groups.

Though ruled by Muslims, the Serbs clung to Christianity. Many Bosnians converted to Islam. In addition, many Serbs fled Kosovo, where both Serbs and Albanians had lived. Kosovo became more Albanian in culture.

In 1878, Serbia broke free of the Ottoman Empire. Many Serbs wanted all the South Slavs to

be free of foreign rule. They also want the South Slavs to unite in one nation. That desire helped spark World War I.

After the war, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was formed. To help end ethnic divisions, the king renamed the nation Yugoslavia in 1929.

During World War II, Germany and Italy invaded Yugoslavia. The Croats worked with the Nazis. Their leader ordered the murder of Jews and Serbs. Many other Yugoslavs joined the Chetniks or the Partisans. Those were two rival groups fighting the Nazis. One Partisan leader, Josip Broz Tito, was also a Communist. After the war, he became the *dictator* of Yugoslavia.

In 1946, a new constitution set up Yugoslavia as a nation of six republics. The republics were Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia. Serbia had two provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina. Croatia and Bosnia had mixed populations with many Serbs.

1. How did the South Slavic groups develop cultural differences?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.

Ethnic Tension Boils Over

What is ethnic cleansing?

In 1980, Tito died. Leaders from Yugoslavia's republics and provinces took turns serving as president.

Slobodan Milošević was a Serbian leader who tried to increase Serbia's power. He proposed the creation of Greater Serbia. Serbia would expand its borders to include other lands where Serbs lived. This plan alarmed Croats and Bosnians. Then in 1991, Serbia stopped a Croat from becoming president.

In response, Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence. In June 1991, the Serbian-led Yugoslav army invaded both republics. Slovenia quickly won its freedom. But Croatia had a large Serbian minority. Past Serb-Croat hatreds exploded in war. In January 1992, the United Nations arranged a *cease-fire*. Slovenia and Croatia remained free.

Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence in March 1992. Bosnia's Muslims and Croats favored the move. Bosnia's Serbs and Serbia started a war to stop it. They also used murder and violence to get rid of Muslims and Croats. The policy of trying to *eliminate* an ethnic group is called **ethnic cleansing**. Over 200,000 people died. Over 2 million fled their homes.

In 1995, the United States set up peace negotiations. In December, a peace treaty was signed. Bosnia remained independent.

The Serbs saw Kosovo as an important part of Serbia. But in the 1990s, mostly Albanians lived in Kosovo. Albanians spoke a non-Slavic language. Their religion was Islam.

Serbia, led by Milošević tried to assert control over Kosovo. He wanted to wipe out the Albanian culture there. In response, Kosovo demanded independence. A group called the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began to attack Serbian officials. In response, the Serbian government started to bomb villages.

In March 1999, NATO started bombing Serbia. NATO wanted Serbia to stop the violence. In June, Milošević pulled his troops out of Kosovo. An international court accused Milošević of *war crimes*. Many countries stopped trading with Yugoslavia.

In 2000, the Yugoslav people voted Milošević out of office. They elected Vojislav Kostunica, a reform leader, president. But the outlook for peace was unclear. Ethnic loyalties still caused tension. The wars had created millions of refugees. Poverty was widespread. Also, Kosovo and Montenegro wanted independence.

2. Why did Serbia's plans alarm Croatia and Slovenia?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.