

Balkan: a powder keg



Geography





The outline in the northwest is a geographic border separating Alps from Dinaric Mountains.
 Alternative historical or cultural borders are marked with lines.

Ancient History

- Human occupation: at least -1.4 million years,
- Greek culture: 9th century BC, trading with natives (7th – 3rd c. BC),
- Illyrian kingdom/s (8th c. – 167 BC),
- Roman period (2nd c. BC – 6th c. AD):
 - Colony -> prefecture,
 - Partition of Roman empire (285 AD),
 - Christianity becomes a state religion (391 AD),
 - Migration period (375 AD – 7th c. AD) + destruction of western Roman empire (476 AD).

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THE ROMAN EMPIRE DIVISION 395

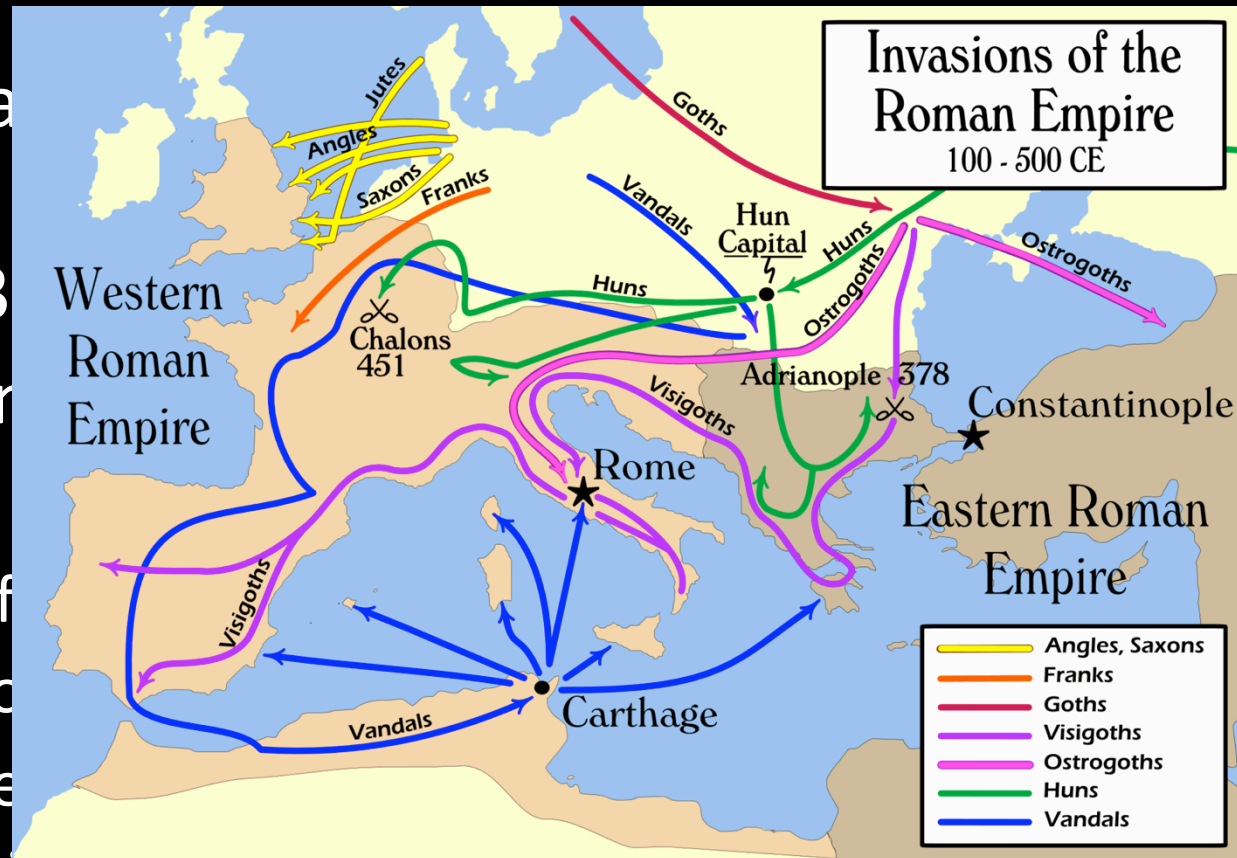


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Middle Ages

- (Relatively) small states:
 - Principality Carantania (664 – (745) - 828),
 - Serbian states (9th c. - 1540),
 - Croatian kingdom (925 – (1102) - 1527),
 - Albanian kingdom (1272 – 1368),
 - Bosnian kingdom (1377 - 1463),
- Outer aggressors:
 - Byzantine empire (330 – 1453),
 - Bulgarian empire (681 – 1018, 1185 – 1396),
 - Hungarians,
 - Franks,
 - Vlachs,
 - Ottomans,
 - Venice republic, ...

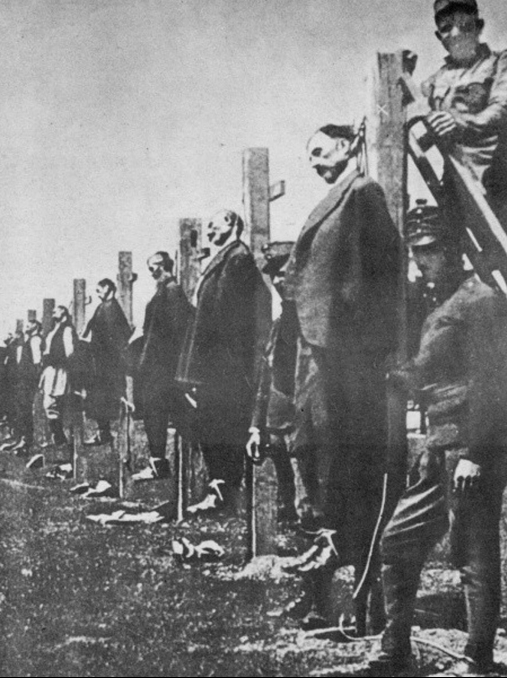
Middle Ages

Milestones:

- Christianization
 - Irish missionaries invited by Salzburg bishops,
 - Byzantine missionaries (st. Cyril and Methodius),
 - Conversion of state rulers, e.g., Bulgarian king,
 - State christianization, e.g., Serbs were baptized by Byzantine empire,
- Schism (1054),
- Battle at Kosovo polje (1389),
- Fall of Constantinople (1453).

15th – 19th century

- Spread of Habsburg monarchy and Ottoman empire,
- Constant attacks by Ottoman empire + establishment of military frontier (1553 - 1881),
- Illyrian Provinces (1809 – 1816),
- Spring of nations (1848),
- Creation of Austria-Hungary (1867),
- Serbian revolution (1804 – 1815 -> de facto independence in 1868),
- Greek independence war (1821 – 1832),
- Congress of Berlin (1878),



20th century





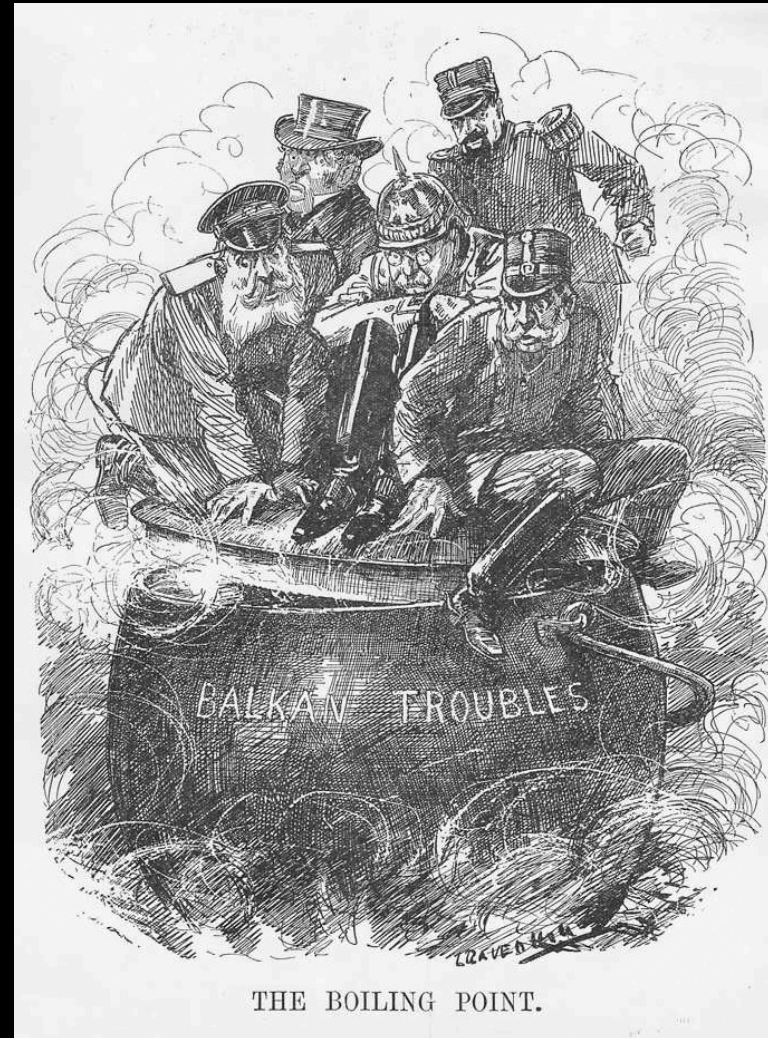
BALKAN-HALBINSEL



----- Boundaries of 1912
 Servian Aspirations

Towards War

- Coup in Serbia and assassination of the King Alexander and Queen Draga (1903)
 - > House of Karađorđević takes over
 - = Serbia turns away from Austria-Hungary towards Russia,
- Young Turk revolution (July 1908)
 - > Bulgarian declaration of independence on 5th October 1908
 - > Austro-Hungarian de-jure annexation of Bosnia on 6th
 - > Serbian mobilization on 7th, but no war,
 - > Ottoman embargo on Austria-Hungary until 26th February 1909
 - = huge commercial losses of Austria-Hungary.



First Balkan War

- Formation of Balkan League (Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro) against Ottoman empire (early 1912)
 - > Montenegro declares war on Ottoman empire in September 1912
 - > Other 3 countries join the war in October and overrun Turks
 - > Turkish counter offensive fails
 - > Treaty of London (30th May 1913) ends the war
 - = Balkan League annexes almost all European territories of Ottoman empire + Albania gains independence.



Second Balkan War

- Unresolved disputes about territories (mostly about Macedonia) within Balkan League remain
 - > Serbia and Greece enter alliance against Bulgaria (1st May 1913)
 - > Bulgaria redeploys troops to the west and launches a surprise attack against Serbia and Greece (16th June)
 - > Serbs stop Bulgarians and Greeks advance
 - > Romania declares war on Bulgaria (10th July) and occupies its northern part
 - > Ottoman empire enters Bulgaria and starts retaking territories lost in the First Balkan War (12th July)
 - > Negotiations start and armistice comes into effect on 31st July
 - > Treaty of Bucharest (10th August)
- = Macedonia is partitioned between Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria + Serbia becomes the most powerful state in the region.

Border Changes



Border Changes



Border Changes



Assassination of Franz Ferdinand

- Ethnic unrests in Austria-Hungary (1914),
- Emperor Franz Joseph is 84 years old and his nephew Franz Ferdinand is the heir to the throne,
- Franz Ferdinand went to Sarajevo to watch military maneuvers and decided to drive through the town on 28th June – the anniversary of the battle of Kosovo

-> seven assassins are waiting and first assassin throws a hand grenade, but fails to kill him

-> Franz Ferdinand is driven to the mayor's house and assassins start going home

-> when Franz Ferdinand is driven home, the driver takes a wrong turn and when he wants to go backwards Gavrilo Princip comes face to face with Franz Ferdinand = Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie are shot and they die on the way to hospital



Assassination of Franz Ferdinand



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and his nephew Franz Ferdinand is



July Crisis

- Pro-austrian local population starts pogroms against Serbs and Austria-Hungary decides to teach Serbs a lesson
 - > Germany grants a support to Austria-Hungary (6th July)
 - > Austria-Hungary sends an ultimatum to Serbia with impossible demands (23rd July)
 - > Serbs ask Russians for help (24th July)
 - > Russians start mobilizing reserves (26th July)
 - > Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia (28th July)
 - > Austrian artillery is shooting on Belgrade and German and Russian emperor are exchanging telegrams (29th July)
 - = Germany declares war on Russia (1st August) and France (3rd August) + Britain declares war on Germany (4th August).

WWI

- Austro-Hungarian troops cross the border at river Drina (12th August),
- Serbia wins the battle of Cer (15th – 24th Aug.),
- Stalemate in the battle of Drina leads to trench warfare,
- Austrians launch a massive attack (5th November) and conquer Belgrade (2nd December),
- Serbs receive ammunition and in a counter-attack (3rd December) push Austro-Hungarians out of the country.

WWI

Important events in the surroundings:

- Ottoman empire joins Central powers (31st October 1914),
- Italy joins Allies (23rd May 1915),
- Bulgaria joins Central powers (12th Oct. 1915).



WWI

- When Bulgaria entered the war, stalemate for Serbs turned into a certain defeat
 - > Serbs retreat across Albania
 - > Austria-Hungary conquers also Montenegro
 - > Serbia is shared between Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria
- Slovenes, Croats, and Bosnians in Austro-Hungarian army keep fighting on Soča front.

Kingdom Yugoslavia

- State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs + Serbia + Montenegro + satellites = Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1st December 1918)
- Treaty of Rapallo (12th November 1920),
- Carinthian plebiscite (10th October 1920),
- Vidovdan constitution (28th June 1921),
- Alexander abolishes the constitution and renames the kingdom into Kingdom of Yugoslavia (6th Jan. 1929),
- Alexander is assassinated in France (9th October 1934),
- Croats gain autonomy (24th August 1939).



WWII

- Yugoslavia signs a pact with Germany (25th March 1941)
 - > Huge protests in Belgrade
 - > Military coup d'état (27th March)
 - > Germany attacks (6th April)
 - > Unconditional surrender (17th April)



WWII

- Occupation, collaboration, and civil war:
 - Foreign forces: Germans, Italians, Hungarians, and Bulgarians
 - Domestic forces: Chetnics (royalists), Liberation front (partisans), Ustashe (Croatian nationalists), and Home-guard.



Tito's era

- “Elections” (11th November 1945) + deposition of King Peter II,
- Declaration of FPRY (29th November 1945),
- Breakup with Stalin (1948),
- Creation of Non-Aligned Movement, i.e., third world (1961),
- FPRY -> SFRY + Tito is declared “president for life” (7th April 1963),
- Tito dies (4th May 1980).



80s

- Olympic games in Sarajevo (1984),
- Economic collapse,
- Political crisis and start of ethnic tensions,
- “Rallies of Truth”, i.e. “Yogurt revolution” (1988).



Breakup

- Congress of the League of Communists (January 1990)
 - > The party falls apart on the national level
 - > Multi-party elections in all the republics
 - = Separatists win in 4 (out of 6!) republics
- Independence referendum in Slovenia (23rd December 1990),
- Yugoslavian army starts taking actions (March 1991),
- Independence referendum in Croatia (2nd May 1991).



War in Slovenia

- Start of the armaments (October 1990),
- Declaration of independence (25th June 1991),
- Yugoslavian army attacks (26th June),
- Brioni Agreement (7th July),
- The last YNA soldier leaves Slovenia (25th October).



War in Croatia

- By the end of September 1991 Serbs controlled 1/3 of Croatia,
- Destruction of Vukovar (August - November 1991),
- Siege of Dubrovnik (October - December 1991),
- Ceasefire (January 1992),
- Continuation of fighting (January 1993),
- Operations Flash (May 1995) and Storm (August 1995)
 - > Exodus of Serbs from Knin
 - > The end of war.



Occupied areas in Croatia (January 1992)



War in Bosnia

- Bosnia declares independence (1st March 1992),
- Siege of Sarajevo (5th April 1992 – 29th February 1996),
- Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina are accepted in UN (22nd May 1992),
- UN troops arrive to Bosnia and the war breaks out (June 1992),
- Genocide in Srebrenica (July 1995),
- NATO air strikes (30th August – 20th Sept. 1995),
- Dayton agreement (14th December 1995).



War in Serbia

- Creation of Kosovo Liberation Army (1991),
- KLA starts attacking (first) authorities and (later) civil population (1995),
- Serbian retributions and start of war (28th February 1998)
- NATO bombardment of Serbia (March – June 1999),
- Serbs retreat from Kosovo and international units arrive (June 1999).



The end of Yugoslavia

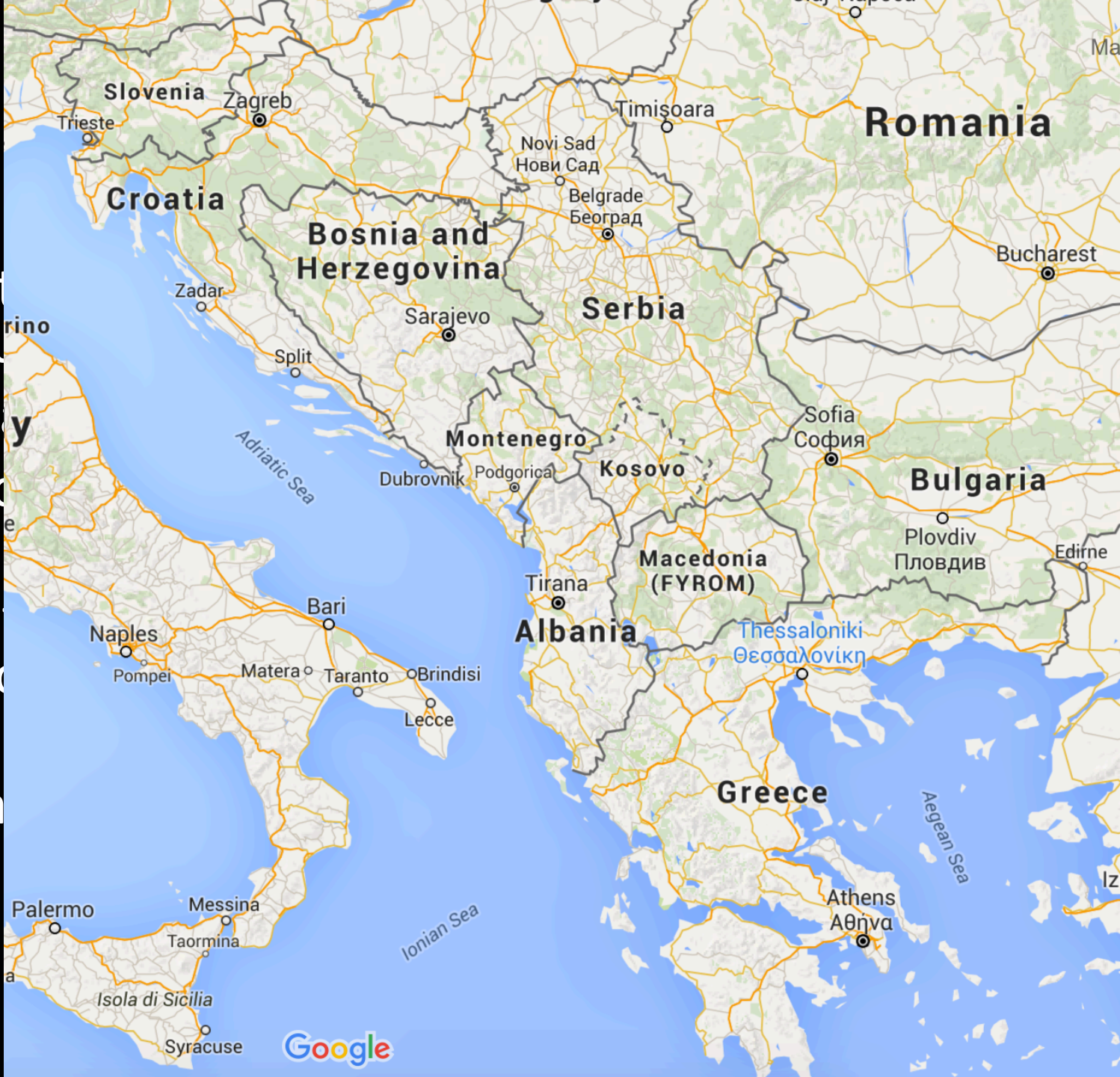
- Macedonia also declared independence (25th September 1991),
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992 – 2003),
- Overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic (5th Oct. 2000),
- State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (2003 – 2006),
- Montenegro declares independence (3rd June 2006),
- Kosovo declares independence (17th February 2008).



Next Chapter

- All west Balkan countries are democratic by constitution, but they are almost “failed states”,
- Slovenia and Croatia are members of EU and NATO,
- Macedonia is blocked on all levels by Greece and has big problems with Albanian minority,
- International units remain in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo to preserve fragile peace,
- There are still unresolved border issues and there are still tensions between countries.

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