

HISTORY

Balkan crisis



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The Balkan crisis indicates the international status of the Balkan Peninsula at the turn of the 19th and 20th century and first decades of the 20th century, which preceded and became one of the causes of World War I. Already in this period, the Balkans was called "barrel of gunpowder" and it was the most critical center of convulsions in Europe. This situation resulted from the growth of tension between the Balkan states and from the sharpening of problems around Eastern question (solving of the problem with international status of declining Ottoman Empire and its position in important regions of Asia and Europe). These facts strongly influenced political affairs and relations between powers in this period.

Causes of the Balkan Crisis :

The Balkan nation-states created in the 19th century (Serbia, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria) wanted to expand their territory with other lands, populated by members of their nations ("national principle"). The conflict of interest caused the fact that many of these areas were belonged to other new States, respectively, even to Ottoman Empire. The situation got more complicated because many religious situation was ruling on the Balkan Peninsula. The most difficult social and religious situation was ruling mainly in Macedonia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. There were also interventions of European powers who finally abandoned the idea of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and competed very hard about its position in international politics, especially in the impact on the new nation-states. Against the international politics of European powers was Ottoman Empire and aspiring policy of the new forces of so-called "Young-Turkish" movement, which wanted to consolidate and restore the authority of the Istanbul power in peripheral regions of the empire.

How the Balkan Crisis arised ?

Crises in the Balkans started since 1908. Just in 5th October 1908 Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, that was occupied by Austria – Hungary since 1878 . After the long time, the monarchy decided to radically intervene in order to eliminate the growing influence of Russia in Serbia (Austrian threatening other positions), and also make a step against the efforts of the southern Slavs to be unified to the same state. Russia considered such action of Austria-Hungary as humiliation so the Russia wait for the chance of revenge.

In 1912 Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece (later joined to Montenegro) decided to use the outrage over the policy of the Ottoman Empire. They united to anti-Turkish coalition and because of this they very quickly defeated Turkey. In connection with consequences of the London peace (sign after this conflict), Ottoman Empire lost most of the European territories. Immediately after the first Balkan crisis, in 29 June 1913 started the Second Balkan crisis as a result of rivalry of old allies from the First Balkan War. Serbia, Greece supported by Romania and also by Turkey, they fought against territorial claims of Bulgaria and they defeated Bulgaria. After this, Greece and Serbia redistributed most of Macedonia. Austria- Hungary records the massive international-political success. Powers accepted the formation of new nation-state-Albania, therefore, it was the state that separates Serbia from the sea.

In despite of this success, Austria-Hungary was still waiting for the opportunity to finally break the ambitious Serbian state. This opportunity arose in 28.06. 1914, after the Sarajevo attempt. This date is known as start of the First World War.



The Balkans before the First Balkan War

The results of the First Balkan war.





Map showing the final territorial gains of the Balkan countries after the Balkan Wars

