

The social crisis and the defeat of Yugoslavia – The breakup of the common state



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Topic

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Context

Students are introduced to the recent past and events that have not yet been clarified. Students make connections between events which took place in the country and world events. They differentiate internal factors responsible for the collapse of Yugoslavia from external factors. Students understand and interpret Cold War policies, the importance of great powers in the international arena and the demonstration of power. They understand interpersonal and interethnic relations in the former Yugoslavia. Aspiration to find the truth and shed the light on past events.

Aim

- gaining new knowledge on Yugoslavia at the end of the 20th century (political crisis, economic crisis, civil war, collapse of Yugoslavia)
- defining new concepts (ethnic cleansing, separatism)
- developing logical and critical thinking in students and identifying cause-and-effect relations between events
- encouraging patriotism in students by creating video clips

Learning Outcomes

- gaining new knowledge on Yugoslavia at the end of the 20th century (political crisis, economic crisis, civil war, disintegration of Yugoslavia)
- defining new concepts (ethnic cleansing, separatism)
- developing logical and critical thinking in students and identifying cause-and-effect relations between events
- encouraging patriotism in students by creating video clips
- gaining new knowledge regarding the political, economic, cultural and social history of modern times

Material & Equipment Needed

Blackboard, PowerPoint presentations, historical wall map, computer, projector

Duration

45 minutes

Lesson Activities Overview (Process)

Introductory part (9-11 minutes)

For the purpose of activating previously gained knowledge (taught in previous classes), we will use introductory questions to test previously acquired knowledge of students and introduce them to a new teaching unit, thus consolidating the entire lecture topic and integrating previously adopted content with new facts.

What was the Holocaust?

Expected answer: Systematic persecution and killing of Jews by Nazi Germany

During World War II a civil war was fought on the territory of Yugoslavia. Who were the participants?

Expected answer: The Chetniks, the Partisans, the Ustashas, the Serbian Volunteer Corps (*Ljotićevo*), the Serbian State Guard (*Nedićevo*).

When did Yugoslavia become a republic?

Expected answer: On the second anniversary of the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), 29 November 1945, by the adoption of the Declaration on the Proclamation of the Republic.

What happened to the Karađorđević dynasty?

Expected answer: King Peter II was banned from entering Yugoslavia, their property was nationalized, and the ruling family was deprived of all rights they were entitled to.

Who was elected the first president of Yugoslavia?

Expected answer: Josip Broz Tito. He was also a lifelong president.

Who was Josip Broz Tito?

Expected answer: Tito was the supreme commander of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), chairman of the Yugoslav Communist Party and president of Yugoslavia. He was also one of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Why was the Non-Aligned Movement founded?

Expected answer: It was founded as an organization of third world countries that belonged neither to the Western nor Eastern bloc. They advocated peaceful solutions to the contentious issues.

Did Yugoslavia have problems with any of the blocs?

Expected answer: Yes, Tito had a conflict with Stalin. Yugoslavia turned to the West, received aid, loans, money, and began to build factories, schools, hospitals.

What is the Constitution?

Expected answer: The highest legal act of a state.

What is centralism, and what is unitarism?

Expected answer: Centralism is a system of government characterized by single authority governance (center). Unitarism means striving for the unity of the state.

What is MASPOK (Croatian Spring, *mass movement*)?

Expected answer: The emergence of nationalism in Croatia in 1971 started the protests and movement for Croatian independence.

What changed with the 1974 Constitution?

Expected answer: Republics and provinces in Yugoslavia were given greater rights and autonomy in decision-making.

When did Tito die?

Expected answer: On 4 May 1980.

Main part of the lecture (28-33 minutes)

Main part of the lecture is intended for the acquisition of new educational content.

At the beginning of the lecture I describe the situation after the death of Josip Broz Tito. Yugoslavia descended into economic and political crisis. The national question became a dominant political issue. Nationalist and separatist demonstrations broke out in Kosovo in 1981.

I ask the students if they know the meaning of the term separatism. Expected answer: Striving for secession.

I continue with the lecture using oral presentation. Demonstrations in Kosovo were stopped by police forces, but pressure and national hatred continued to smolder. It was only a matter of time before a strong spark ignited the entire Balkans. The situation was further worsened by the 1982 economic crash, which some experts called bankruptcy. The crisis led to a shortage of fuel, detergents, and even coffee. These events served the politicians who used scarcity and nationalism to gain political points as they lusted for power, authority, money and fame. Nothing could stop them.

At the same time, in addition to the situation in the country, the collapse of Yugoslavia was also influenced by events in Europe and the world, such as the fall of communism, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany.

So far we have listed causes which led to the collapse of great Yugoslavia. Now we are going to watch the begging of the end of one regional power from the Balkans. I play a video clip from the football match Dinamo – Zvezda and analyze the stadium riots together with the students.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k18WwhrmLJo>

Then we watch a clip from the Yugoslavia - Netherlands match played in Zagreb in 1990.

We analyze the national anthem and goal scoring celebrations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPGAk2C-HCI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdK9GYfjggQ>

I show the students photos of the main protagonists behind the collapse of Yugoslavia: Milošević, Tuđman and Izetbegović. We talk about hegemony, nationalism and politics.

I inform the students that the formal breakup of Yugoslavia began on 25 June 1991 when the Slovenian Parliament, according to referendum results, voted for independence of this Republic.

The Croatian Parliament did the same a day later. On 25 December 1990 the same Parliament promulgated a new Constitution by which the Serbs lost the status of a constituent people.

We link these events with world events: the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall.

It was also a time of technological development in the world, development of telecommunication networks, PC and the Internet. At the same time, the Balkans and Yugoslavia were facing an increase of interethnic hatred and public expression of nationalism that awoke memories of the fascist crimes committed during World War II. Media propaganda spread hatred, anger and disinformation.

I play music videos of Thompson <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUbCp2WgkYw>

and Baja Mali Knindža <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAifMqM3g-E> as an example of war propaganda. As a proof that not everyone agreed with the war, I show students the Belgrade demonstrations from March 1991.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHtjgRqc1jQ>

Subsequently, the Security Council of the UN and the EU imposed economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SRJ) which lasted from 1992 to 1996. Nothing could be imported nor exported.

We analyze the idea of Yugoslavia as presented in popular songs.

Zabranjeno pušenje – Yugo 45 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lofpvkGJPM>

Đorđe Balašević – Soliter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmwGs5Evumk>

- Krivi smo mi <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icK9XFTcfs0>

Rambo Amadeus – Čobane <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=df-oNP3TI1s>
Zabranjeno pušenje - Boško i Admirala <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMMFW3lqiFE>

Several horrific events took place in the Civil War. Some of them were even characterized as war crimes and crimes against humanity. One such event was Srebrenica where approximately 8,000 soldiers and Bosniak civilians were killed by the Bosnian Serb Army of Republika Srpska.

Some other sources state a smaller number of killed Bosniaks.

Also, military operations Bljesak (Flash) and Oluja (Storm), planned and executed by the Croatian army against the Serbs, implied ethnic cleansing of its territory and forced 220,000 Serbs to leave.

Daily combat activities of the Albanian terrorist group called the KLA, as well as banditry and clashes with security forces in which several civilians lost their lives, exacerbated the situation in Kosovo.

It was followed by interference of great world powers and bombing of SRJ by NATO.

I ask students if they know what NATO is.

Expected answer: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, established in 1949, which quickly grew into an international alliance based in Brussels.

I continue with the lecture by explaining that NATO bombed the SRJ in the period from March to June, a total of 78 days. Kosovo declared independence in 2008. However, it is still not fully recognized as an independent state. At the end of the central part of the lecture I play a speech delivered by the actor Bata Stojković regarding the Balkans, taken from the film *Balkanska pravila* (Balkan Rules).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OPAwRMrBMM>

Final part of the lecture (4-5 minutes)

I check if the students have understood the essence of this educational unit and its content.

This is followed by a brief revision of the newly acquired content introduced in class and a discussion on the topic.

What is the cause of the breakup of Yugoslavia?

Expected answer: The economic and political crisis after the death of Josip Broz Tito.

When did the breakup of Yugoslavia officially start?

Expected answer: On 25 June 1991- when Slovenia declared independence.

Who were the political protagonists behind the breakup of Yugoslavia?

Expected answer: Milošević, Tuđman and Izetbegović.

Who incited ethnic animosity and hatred?

Expected answer: The media. Propaganda was everywhere.

Where was the dissatisfaction of citizens first manifested?

Expected answer: At football matches.

Where are life in Yugoslavia and consequences of the war presented the best?

Expected answer: In the verses of the most popular Yugoslav recording artists.

Sources

- Đ. Đurić, M. Pavlović, Udžbenik za osmi razred osnovne škole, Zavod za udžbenike, Belgrade, 2010
- Povijesni atlas (Historical atlas)
- Borislav Jović, Politički lavirint devedesetih, Službeni glasnik, 2010
- Milan Lompar, Duh samoporicanja, Novi Sad, 2012
- M. Perović, Metodika nastave istorije, Belgrade, 1995

Further Readings

- Selected historical sources from the Internet

Assessment options

Student:

IS.1.1.7. names most important events from national history

IS.1.1.9. knows where the most important events of national and world history took place

IS.1.1.10. can specify the causes and consequences of the most important past events

IS.1.2.1. can recognize historic events and persons based on characteristic historical sources (text, image, material)

IS.2.1.1. can link a person and historical event with corresponding time frame and historical period

IS.2.1.2. recognizes that there is a correlation between national, regional and world history

IS.2.2.1. can recognize an event, phenomenon and person based on the content of specific written historical sources

IS.3.1.3. knows specific details of national and world history

IS.3.2.3. can analyze and assess the chronological origin of the source

Homework ideas

Students should write a short essay on the topic Love thy own, respect others. Also, students are referred to a link where they can watch a documentary titled *Većina počinje ovde* (The Majority Starts Here) which follows a group of six young people who travel in the former Yugoslavia confronting the legacy of the conflicts of the nineties.

Adaptation ideas

High school students can study available clippings from the newspapers *Velika Srbija*, *Srpska Tenja* and analyze printed materials, as well as listen to a short TV report about the same event reported by Belgrade and Zagreb media. It is necessary to understand the importance of propaganda, develop critical thinking and awareness of the responsibility of individuals, deal with the past and war crimes. The students of high school age may listen to speeches by political leaders and warmongers. They can also discuss the Z4 Plan, the Dayton Agreement, the Kumanovo Agreement, "Yellow House", decisions of the Court of The Hague.

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