Activity 1: The Rise of Nationalism and the Fall of Yugoslavia

Activity 1 requires you to read six selections about the former Yugoslavia and then answer questions about them. The first article (Goodrich, 1993) is from The Christian Science Monitor. It is one of several articles we have selected from the Monitor because of its world-famous coverage of international affairs—not because of its religious affiliation. The Goodrich article provides a 1,500-year historical overview that is not usually available in newspapers. We have added a few key points to this article [in square brackets], and some useful maps (Figures 13.6–13.8, Table 13.1).

The second reading consists of excerpts from a United Nations research article by Ali Karaosmanoğlu (1993) that offers a concise summary of how and why the former Yugoslavia fell apart. It highlights the most important fact about the political geography of the area: that the former Yugoslavia was a multination state, but breaking it into its individual republics (i.e., provinces) did not solve the problem because both Bosnia and Croatia were also each a mix of nations.

In the third article, photojournalist Lee Malis of The Christian Science Monitor tells the harrowing tale of one young Muslim woman’s nightmare at the hands of the Bosnian Serbs. We warn you of the graphic nature of this short feature article; you could find it disturbing. It should be emphasized that the Serbs were not the only nation to engage in such war crimes.

Why not carve Bosnia up into three states, and let the Serbian part of Bosnia join with Serbia and the Croatian part of Bosnia join with Croatia? Why does the rest of the world care about keeping Bosnia in one piece? This is the subject of the fourth reading, a short analysis by Laura Kay Rozen from The Christian Science Monitor in September 1996, at the time of the first-ever Bosnian elections. Five key points summarize why keeping Bosnia whole was important to the foreign policies of other countries. Note that neither we (the textbook authors) nor the article author herself necessarily espouse all of these arguments. In fact, one of the points regarding a fear of Islamic terrorism from a Muslim-dominated Bosnian state is an example of prejudicial thinking. However, all five arguments frequently were heard on talk shows and seen on op-ed pages of the time.

The final reading consists of excerpts from two U.S. Department of State reports on the Kosovo (pronounced Koh-SOH-vah) crisis. The stated purpose of these reports was to document the extent of ethnic cleansing by the Serbs against the Albanians in Kosovo. Aerial photography and other forms of evidence accompanied these reports, which were delivered to the Executive Branch of the U.S. government and Congress, U.S. allies, and the international community. They were important documents in the decisions to use U.S. military power to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and to justify the deployment of U.S. troops as peacekeepers. The reports were also made available to the media and the public over the Internet. In reading these excerpts, you should think about some of the geopolitical issues that could explain why the United States chose to intervene in this particular crisis but not in...
others. The Serbs have historically been allies with the Russians, who are also Slavs who follow an Eastern Orthodox form of Christianity. Other issues to consider are the U.S.’s historic alliance with Western Europeans, the importance of not appearing to be anti-Islamic, and the power of media images of mass graves, burning houses, and refugees.

It would take many newspaper articles to fill you in on all that happened in the aftermaths of the Bosnia and Kosovo crises. We wrap it up for you with a short summary and map that updates you to early 2006.

► Activity 1 Readings


► Questions

(Note: Answers to questions marked by * cannot be obtained directly in the readings. You’ll need to think critically about the readings and apply concepts properly to figure them out.)

A. History of Hatred

Refer to articles by Goodrich and Karaosmanoğlu and Figures 13.6 and 13.9.

1.1. What cultural trait, language or religion, divides the Serbs and Croats?

1.2. Name the religion of the Serbs and of the Croats.

1.3. What historical development is responsible for this religious divide between Serbs and Croats?

1.4. How did Muslims come to this region of Europe?

1.5. In what century did the Muslims defeat Serbia in the battle of Kosovo?

1.6. What other outside empire next dominated the northern parts of the region in the several centuries prior to World War I?

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1.16. Why didn’t the Serb-dominated government of Yugoslavia put up more of a fight to keep Slovenia from breaking away?*

1.17. After Slovenia became independent, could it have been characterized as a nation-state (see Figure 13.8)?*

1.18. The second war also started in the spring of 1991, but in Croatia. The two warring nations were ______________________ and ______________________.

D. Bosnia

*Use article by Rozen, Table 13.1, and Figures 13.7, 13.8, and 13.12.*

To answer the next set of questions, you need to adjust your mental map. After breaking up, the former Yugoslavia consisted of five states, not one. In addition to Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia, the remaining two republics, Serbia and Montenegro, stayed together under the name of Yugoslavia. They were sometimes referred to as the “rump Yugoslavia” to distinguish it from the former, larger Yugoslavia. The third war within the former Yugoslavia began in Bosnia in the spring of 1992.

1.19. Which was the dominant nation within Bosnia in terms of population?

1.20. Name the second and third most populous nations within Bosnia’s borders.

1.21. Which, if any, of these two minority nations in Bosnia were irredenta of other states?*

1.22. After Bosnia established its independence, would it have been best described as a state, a nation, or a nation-state?*

1.23. Why would the breakup of Bosnia worsen the refugee problem?
Chapter 13. Breaking Up Is Hard to Do: Nations, States, and Nation-States

The Roman Empire adopted Christianity in the fourth century, and split administration between a western half centered on Rome, and an eastern half whose capital was Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey). The western half became predominantly Catholic, the eastern half predominantly Orthodox. This divide still runs through the former Yugoslavia: Slovenes and Croats are mostly Catholic, while Serbs, Macedonians, and Montenegrins are mostly Orthodox.

Islam originated in Mecca in current-day Saudi Arabia, but soon spread to include what is now Turkey. Centuries later, the Ottoman Empire arose in Turkey and spread Islam well into the Balkans and Europe. Current-day Bosnian Muslims are mostly Slavs who converted to Islam during the long reign of the Ottomans.

The outside power that controlled most of the Balkans on the eve of World War I was the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In fact, World War I was triggered when a Bosnian Serb, irate over the latest chapter of outside domination, assassinated the Austro-Hungarian Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914.

Figure 13.6 Three major empires that divided the Slavic-speaking peoples in the Balkans.

[literally “land of the southern Slavs”] in 1918. Serbia was the dominant partner, which led to constant friction with the Croats. The new country never had a chance. Nazi Germany invaded in 1941 and set up a fascist Croatian puppet state. [The Croatian] Ustashe troops committed terrible atrocities against Bosnian and Croatian Serbs [murdering approximately 350,000 Serbs]. Serbian nationalist guerrillas, the Chetniks, retaliated in kind.

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TABLE 13.1 Percentages of Prewar Ethnic Populations, by Republic or Autonomous Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Albanians</th>
<th>Croats</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Serbs</th>
<th>Slovenes</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>90</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vojvodina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21 Hungarians</td>
<td>23 Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Yugoslavia (all republics)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


But without Tito’s personal magnetism and willingness to use force, the system soon began to break down. After communism collapsed in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the Yugoslav federation began to dissolve as Croats and Slovenes demanded independence, partly in pursuit of historic aspirations but also in fear of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic’s repression of the Albanian minority in Kosovo. Mr. Milosevic and Croatian President Franjo Tudjman made things worse by their inflammatory rhetoric and their policies of grabbing land from neighboring republics, to create a greater Serbia and a greater Croatia, and to expel other groups. [By the time the fighting died down, Yugoslavia had broken into five new states.] (Figure 13.7b.)

The region remains a tinder box: Greeks are nervous about the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia; Montenegrins, still united with Serbia in rump Yugoslavia, are growing restless; and serious tensions persist between Hungarians and Romanians.

The most dangerous area is Kosovo province in Serbia. An historical Serbian heartland, it is now inhabited mostly by ethnic Albanians, who have seen their rights suppressed by the Milosevic government. Almost half the Albanians in the world live in Serbia; should the Serbs start an ethnic-cleansing campaign, it is doubtful Albania could stand by. Such a conflict could ignite tensions between Greece, which likely would side with the Orthodox Serbs, and Turkey, which would support the Muslim Slavs and mostly Muslim Albanians.

The question now is whether the US can provide the leadership that will take the Balkans in the direction of peace or whether the region will sink deeper into disaster.

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corridors to link up ethnic Serbian enclaves in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina with Serbia. These policies were (and still are) extensively applied to Bosnian Muslims and Croats. The victims were either directly driven out or intimidated to flee their homes. The methods of intimidation included murder, rape, and imprisonment in concentration camps. The Yugoslav conflict brought more than two million refugees and displaced persons. Countries such as Croatia, Austria, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia, and Turkey were put under migratory pressure. Serbia resettled ethnic Serbs in areas that were ethnically cleansed, thereby using refugees to change the demographic composition of regions and thus contributing to the creation of a Greater Serbia.

The Kosovo problem constitutes one of the most dangerous crisis areas in Yugoslavia’s ongoing process of disintegration. The origins of this problem can be traced back to the creation of an independent Albanian state after the defeat of Turkey in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. The independent Albania included only 50 percent of the Albanian population in the area. A great number of Albanians remained in Kosovo, an Ottoman province, most of which was given to Serbia. Today there are more than 2 million Albanians in Kosovo (an overwhelming majority of them are Muslims; the figure includes 15,000 Turks) and they account for over 90 percent of the population, the remaining 10 percent being Serbian and Montenegrin. However, the Serbs regard Kosovo as their historic heartland. Kosovo was the cradle of the medieval Serbian state. [See Figure 13.9.] It is the historic battlefield where the Serbs fought against the Ottomans in 1389. It is also a region containing many Orthodox churches and monasteries. These factors make the province a cultural and spiritual centre for the Serbs. Kosovo has greatly contributed to the formation of a Serbian collective memory and consciousness, and this has become particularly significant in the process of building a Serbian state based on ethnic nationalism.

While the Serbs view Kosovo as a part of the Serbian historical patrimony that cannot be negotiable, the Albanians base their claims on self-determination. Kosovo was in fact a self-governing province of Serbia in terms of the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution. Kosovo had its semi-autonomous status gradually eroded by the central government in Belgrade in 1990–1991. The basic cultural and educational rights of the Albanian population were abrogated. The Serbian authorities shut down the Albanian language schools. They dismissed Albanians from the police force, which has been totally serbianized. Belgrade also reinforced the local security force by sending in Serbian and Montenegrin military units. Moreover, the economy was almost entirely serbianized. Most of the Albanian workers and managers were replaced with the Serbs.

The Albanians, for their part, took measures to set up their own state organization in a gradual and clandestine manner. In September 1991 they held a referendum in which they voted for a “sovereign and independent” Kosovo. In May 1992 they held elections [and elected the moderate intellectual Ibrahim Rugova]. They also set up an underground school system financed by parents. Despite these efforts, the Kosovars have not been able to develop an effective means to defend themselves should the fighting spread to Kosovo. The lack of adequate defensive means, on the one hand, and the offensive Serbian strategy on the other, have brought about a very deep sense of insecurity, not only in Kosovo but also in Albania. It should be noted that this feeling of insecurity, combined with the measures of democratization in Albania and Kosovo, increased the assertiveness of Albanians. As a matter of fact, the democratic elections in both countries have further increased popular pressure for an Albanian-Kosovar reunion.
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Communist partisans under Josip Broz Tito, armed by the Allies, fought the Germans to a standstill, broke with the Chetniks, and took power at the end of the war. Post–World War II Yugoslavia had the same external boundaries as before, but internally it was divided into six republics: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro (Figure 13.7a). There was some attempt to define these republics along ethnonational lines, but of the six, only Slovenia was even close to being ethnically pure; see Table 13.1 and Figure 13.8. Communist rule under Marshal Tito kept a tight lid on ethnic feuding, but it continued to smolder. [Under communist rule, Serbia was transformed from an agrarian to an industrial society.] When Tito died in 1980, he left in place a collective presidency of Yugoslavia that rotated among the six republics.

Figure 13.7 (a) Pre-breakup Yugoslavia; (b) Post-breakup Yugoslavia.

Figure 13.8 Prewar ethnic distribution in the former Yugoslavia.

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1.7. A country called Yugoslavia (Land of the Southern Slavs) first came into being after World War I. Which of its member nations dominated Yugoslavia at that time?

1.8. What happened during World War II that further increased Serb-Croat hatred and added to the Serb sense of victimhood?

B. The Pre-Breakup Situation

Refer to articles by Goodrich and Karaosmanoğlu, Figures 13.7 and 13.8, and Table 13.1.

After World War II, Yugoslavia adopted a federal system of government. The country was divided into six “republics,” similar to the 50 U.S. states and 13 Canadian provinces, but with one important difference. In Yugoslavia, the government tried to define the republics along ethnonational lines.

1.9. Which republic was most ethnically uniform?

1.10. Which republic was least ethnically uniform?

1.11. Prior to its breakup, was Yugoslavia a nation-state, a multistate nation, or a multination state?

1.12. The prewar state of Yugoslavia referred to its component regions as “republics.” Would a political geographer have called them states, nations, or provinces?

1.13. From World War II until its breakup, Yugoslavia had what kind of government—communist, capitalist, or monarchy?

C. The Breakup

Refer to article by Karaosmanoğlu, Figures 13.7 and 13.8, and Table 13.1.

From 1991 to 1993, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia all claimed independent status. In fact, the breakup of Yugoslavia consisted of three wars, not one.

1.14. Did Yugoslavia break up because of ethnonationalism or irredentism?

1.15. The first war, which lasted only ten days, was between Slovenia and the Yugoslavian government after Slovenia declared its independence in the spring of 1991. Would the declaration of independence by Slovenia be described as an act of irredentism or secession?
F. All's Not Quiet on the Balkan Front

Refer to Update by authors and Figure 13.8.

1.32. Is there still a state called Yugoslavia? __________

If not, what is it called now? ____________________________

1.33. Aside from the smoldering conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo, what other political geographic issues remain that might break up an existing state and create a new state in the region?

ACTIVITY 1 READINGS

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Old Animosities, Exploited Today, Underlie Complex Balkans Puzzle³

by Lawrence J. Goodrich, staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor.

Boston—As the likelihood grows that American forces will be directly involved in trying to restore the peace in the former Yugoslavia, many Americans are asking how the slaughter there began.

Unfortunately, what is happening today in the Balkans is nothing new. It is the continuation of the ethnic and religious hatreds that have swept the region for centuries, made worse by radical nationalists' cynical exploitation of these animosities.

The ethnic mixture of the Balkans began to form about the 5th century A.D. Vast tribal migrations swept across Europe: Germanic tribes came west, followed by Slavs to their east. In succeeding centuries Magyars (Hungarians), Mongols, Tatars, and Bulgars ranged over the Balkans. Between Western and Eastern Europe, a great gulf developed. Rome had fallen, but the Roman Empire in the East, with its capital at Constantinople (Byzantium), lasted another 1,000 years. The Roman church without a state and the Byzantine church subservient to the emperor split over long-standing political and theological disputes. This chasm went right through the Balkans: Hungarians, Slovenes, and Croats were Roman Catholic, while Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, and Serbs were Eastern Orthodox [see Figure 13.6a].

³Adapted by the authors.

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All across Europe nation-states began to form around the most powerful tribes. But in the 14th and 15th centuries, a series of catastrophes struck the Balkans. First the Ottoman Turks defeated Serbia at the battle of Kosovo in 1389. Constantinople (now Istanbul) fell in 1453. The Ottoman Turks introduced the Muslim (i.e., Islamic) religion into the region.

By 1529 the Turks had fought their way to the gates of Vienna, which they besieged again in 1683. All political, cultural, and economic evolution in those parts of the Balkans under Turkish rule stopped under the oppression of the Turkish sultan.

For the next 400 years, the history of the Balkans was a history of rivalry among the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires. Croats, Slovenes, and Transylvanian Romanians lived under the influence of Vienna and Budapest. Romanians, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Serbs, and some Albanians clung tenaciously to their Eastern Orthodox faith, which became entwined with their national aspirations. Most Albanians and some Slavs, however, converted to Islam.

The Balkan peasantry was kept impoverished as agricultural riches were shipped off to feed the Ottoman Empire. The Turks played off tribes, clans, and families against each other, poisoning the political culture. Christianity was barely tolerated.

None of the subsequent development of Western and Central Europe—the growth of guilds and the middle class, the decline of feudalism, the Reformation and the Counterreformation, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment—touched the Balkans.

By the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was in serious decline. Most of the Balkan ethnic groups began to agitate for independence and their own states. But their villages were often scattered among each other.

Little by little each group threw off Turkish rule. Russia felt a special calling to help its Orthodox Slav brethren, the Serbs and Bulgarians, and provided political or military support.

But the rule of the Balkans is: Everything for my ethnic group and nothing for yours. The group on top now governs at the expense of the others; the groups out of power wreak vengeance when the power balance shifts. People see themselves as Serbs, Croatians, or Albanians first and as individuals second.

This attitude is preserved by the region’s economic backwardness and low educational levels. It is especially true in rural areas. While cities may be ethnically mixed, villages usually are ethnically pure, or nearly so.

In 1908, Austria-Hungary directly annexed Bosnia, inciting the Serbs to seek the aid of Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece in seizing the last Ottoman-ruled lands in Europe. In the ensuing Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, Serbia obtained northern and central Macedonia, but Austria compelled it to yield Albanian lands that would have given Austria access to the sea. Serb animosity against Austria-Hungary reached a climax on June 28, 1914, when the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip—the spark that lit the powder keg of World War I.

After the Turkish and Austrian Empires collapsed at the end of World War I, the victorious Allies carved up the remains into a series of new, artificial Balkan states. The southern Slav groups were lumped together in what officially was christened Yugoslavia.
intervention nor traditional ethnic animosities. The latter could well be prevented from escalating to a bloody conflict situation if moderate policies were adopted by the conflicting regional entities. First of all, Serbia's, and its extreme nationalist leader Milosević's, ambition to create a "Greater Serbia" constitute the major cause of the crisis.[5] To some extent, the crisis is also the product of the Croatian and Bosnian policies of independence which failed to show sufficient consideration for the large Serbian communities in both countries.

Yugoslavia's nations had "very different and often mutually exclusive needs and aspirations." For the Serbs [who were the dominant power], Yugoslavia's future depended on further and tighter centralization. The non-Serb majorities, on the contrary, were in favor of creating their own sovereign states, or at least a confederation of sovereign states...

A series of events in 1990–91 contributed to the deterioration of the crisis. In April 1990, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) and the Democratic United Opposition of Slovenia (DELOS) came to power as a result of multi-party elections. Both political parties were centre-right and pro-independence. During the election campaign, the HDZ advocated a "Greater Croatia" that would annex Croat-populated regions of Bosnia while condemning "greater Serbian hegemony" [i.e., dominance]. This created considerable concern among the Serbian population living in the border areas of Croatia. The Serbian perception of this threat was reinforced, on the one hand, by the increasingly secessionist stance of Croatia, and on the other, by the expulsion of Serbs from government positions. Moreover, the Croatian authorities threatened the Serbs by saying they would take measures to weaken Serbian economic position in the republic. These moves of the Croatian government led to growing Serbian fears, and, eventually, to insurrections and armed clashes...

In February, [Serbian President] Milosevic and [Croatian President] Tudjman agreed on Serbian and Croatian annexations in Bosnia. ... [A Bosnian referendum on independence] was held in March 1992 without Serbian participation. The Muslims and Croats voted in favor of a "sovereign and independent Bosnia and Herzegovina" while the Serbs were erecting barricades around Sarajevo.

So far there have been three wars in the Yugoslav succession. The first took place in Slovenia in the Spring of 1991 and lasted for 10 days. The Serbian minority in Slovenia is only 2.4% of the population and is not implicated in the Serbian design of creating a "Greater Serbia." The conflict remained local without regional or international implications. The second war [between Croats and Serbs from Croatia and Serbia] started in Croatia in the spring of 1991. The hostilities were resumed again in February 1993 while the UN and EC representatives were working on a peace plan. The third began in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the spring of 1992 and is still being waged.

The last two conflicts had a significant similarity. One of their common features was the application by the Serbs of policies of "ethnic cleansing." This involved changing the demographic composition of villages, towns, and regions and clearing land...

[As Roskin and Berry (1997) point out: "It's easy to blame the Serbs, but understand where they are coming from psychologically. The Serbs argue: 'All right, you bastards who murdered us during World War II, if you want an independent Croatia and Bosnia, we have the right to pull the Serb areas out of your republics and gather them into a Greater Serbia, where they will be safe.' The attitude of Serbs closely parallels that of Israelis: 'We have historically been the victim of massacres, and we aren't going to take it anymore.' In fact, there's plenty of blame to go around in Yugoslavia.]
Nevertheless, in spite of popular pressure, Albanian authorities in both coun-
tries prevented numerous incidents from escalating to all-out conflict. [Remember
that this was published in 1993.] Moreover, many Albanians seem willing to accept
some form of autonomy within a new Yugoslavia. But this type of settlement is
abhorred by the Milosevic administration which still views Kosovo as an integral
part of a unitary Serbia.

The Albanians are careful not to provide the Serbian authorities with an excuse
for a violent crackdown and the Albanian government has been urging the Kosovars
to contribute to a peaceful solution of the Kosovo problem. But Albanian leaders
have repeatedly declared that ethnic cleansing in Kosovo would not be tolerated
by Tirana [Albania's capital] and would lead to Albania's military intervention.

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR
February 17, 1993; Copyright © 1993 Lee Malis/Spectrum Pictures. Reprinted by permission.

**Bosnia: The Flight from Ethnic Cleansing**
by Lee Malis
(photos by Lee Malis)

Travnik, Bosnia-Herzegovina—The war in Bosnia continues. Diplomats still talk about
what needs to be done, and how to make it stand once it is agreed upon. But the
television news broadcasts say the bombings continue in Sarajevo. Another Bosnian
village with a strange name falls to Serbian militias, and another massacre occurs
in an unfamiliar place. Muslims try to retake eastern towns, and Serbs block UN
attempts to break through with aid.