

DISINTEGRATION OF YUGOSLAVIA & INDEPENDENCE

In 1989, revolutions began which would eventually overthrow communist states across Europe. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, communism was abandoned in Yugoslavia and war broke out at the development of five successor states: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia began to disintegrate in 1991. Two states: Slovenia and Croatia, declared their independence.

Muslim Bosniaks	Orthodox Serbs	Catholic Croats
44%	32.5%	17%

On 29th February, and 1st March 1992 a referendum on independence was held in Bosnia. 99.7% voted "Yes". Independence was declared on 3rd March 1992. Bosnian Muslims wanted a centralised independent Bosnia. As Bosnia was a multicultural centre, their independence meant there was a struggle for political and religious power. The Serbs in Bosnia then declared the independence of the Republika Srpska. The presidents of Serbia and Croatia join together and carved up Bosnia between themselves. Bosnia had limited weapons, so they were an easy target.

Many of the Bosnian Serb population were unhappy as they wanted to remain in the multicultural Bosnia they were used to and liked. However, Karadžić, the self-appointed leader of the Bosnia Serbs, did not want this to continue.

A war against the Bosnian Muslims by the Bosnian Serb army (backed by Serbia) began. It was a war of aggression to destroy a people – Muslims.

The Bosnian War had been raging within Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1992 and would last until 1995. In this time, murder, systematic rape and ethnic cleansing took place. This was mainly done by Bosnian Serbs against Bosnian Muslims.