DESCRIPTION

The Balkan region of Europe is distinct in many ways. It includes eight countries with individual traditions, languages, and politics; three religions that coexist uneasily; political unrest since the fall of communism; and the historic influence of Europe and Asia. Current footage illustrates some history, geographical features, industries, and attractions of the area. Emphasizes that cultural differences must be solved before the region prospers.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

- To identify the countries and geographical characteristics of this region.
- To present important industries of this region.
- To depict the variety of cultures present in this region.
- To illustrate the problems of religious intolerance and political unrest in this region.
- To review some history of this region.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Read the CAPTION SCRIPT to determine unfamiliar vocabulary and language concepts.
2. Locate the Balkan region of Europe on a globe or world map.
3. Review the changing country names and political affiliations.
4. Define and discuss the terms coexistence, intolerance, and ethnic conflicts.

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Point out the term subsistence economy and its description.
AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Why did the fall of Communism trigger violent fighting in the Balkan region? Consider:
   a. Economic effects
   b. Political effects
   c. Religious effects
   d. Other effects

2. Why are people from this area leaving their homes as refugees? Where are the refugees going?

3. From what other countries have people fled recently?

4. What causes intolerance and conflict among peoples in the Balkan region? Consider:
   a. Asian cultural influences
   b. European cultural influences
   c. Religious beliefs and traditions

5. Why is the conflict in the Balkan region of such world-wide concern?

6. How might Americans learn from the Balkan region’s problems?

7. Compare the ethnic conflicts in the Balkan region to ethnic conflicts in America.

8. Discuss the idea that the Balkan people will have to put aside their differences and work together to fully participate in the world community.

Applications and Activities

1. On a blank map of the Balkan region, label countries, major cities, mountains, rivers, and seas.

2. Describe a subtropical Mediterranean climate. Locate other places in the world with that kind of climate.

3. Research uses for copper, marble, and rose oil.
   a. Find out which countries of the world import these products from the Balkan region.
   b. Find out what things the Balkan region imports.
   c. Graph this information.
4. Research and discuss the various groups who have inhabited the Adriatic coast since ancient times. Create a time line.

5. Using the CAPTION SCRIPT, make an outline to organize the information.

6. Research and report on the three major religions of this area. Role-play a conflict between the three groups.

7. Research the Balkans’ religious intolerance and ethnic conflicts. Include information about:
   a. The basic differences that the people fight about
   b. The wars that have resulted from their conflicts

8. Research and compare the European and Asian influences in this region.

9. Debate the advantages and disadvantages of accepting refugees into the United States. Consider:
   a. The economic impact
   b. The cultural impact
   c. The political impact
   d. The religious impact

10. List and locate other countries that have a subsistence economy.

11. Research the life of the young Serbian nationalist who committed the assassination that started World War I.

12. Discuss ways other nations might help to bring about a peaceful change in the Balkan region.

WEBSITES

Explore the Internet to discover sites related to this topic. Check the CFV website for related information (http://www.cfv.org).
CAPTION SCRIPT

Following are the captions as they appear on the video. Teachers are encouraged to read the script prior to viewing the video for pertinent vocabulary, to discover language patterns within the captions, or to determine content for introduction or review. Enlarged copies may be given to students as a language exercise.

(female narrator)
Of all the continents of the earth,
Europe is the second smallest.
It's smaller than Asia...
smaller than Africa...
smaller than either North or South America,
and just a little bigger than Australia.
In Balkan Europe,
one can find comfortable beaches
along the Adriatic Sea,
as well as a rugged, mountainous interior.
It is a region rich in agriculture
and agricultural products.
Its picturesque urban scenery
is a blend of the new and the old.
Its place in the history of both Europe and Asia is important.
It is a region of many different cultural heritages of both European and Asian influences.
The coexistence of these heritages and influences has never been smooth or harmonious.
The Balkan Peninsula encompasses a number of small countries.
Because of border disputes, this region is a mapmaker's nightmare: ...and a part of Turkey are located there.
The Balkan Peninsula borders on two seas.
In the southwest, there is the Adriatic Sea.
And in the northeast, the Black Sea.
In between, the inland of the Balkan Peninsula
is mostly mountainous.
The Carpathian Mountains are an extension of the Alps.
The Bosporus Strait, between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, marks the geographical boundary between Europe and Asia.
One of the region's most popular attractions is the Adriatic coast, nicknamed "the country of sunshine." Its mainly subtropical Mediterranean climate makes it an ideal vacation spot for people from Central and northern Europe.
In more remote parts of the region, one can still find Orthodox monasteries, where monks have developed sophisticated transport systems to the isolated hilltops.
Some of these monks lead the lives of hermits.
There are many places within the Balkan region where time seems to have stood still for centuries, where people still use domestic animals for both transportation and field work, and the villages are lined with dirt roads.

It is rare to find cars or trucks traveling these roads.
When winter arrives, the people here become even more isolated.

Television antennae on the roofs nevertheless prove that these remote places are connected, in a way, with the rest of Europe and the world at large.
But these outside influences have had little effect on the reality of their lives.
The principal river of the region is the Danube.
The Danube is a busy transport route linking most of the Balkan countries to each other...
and through the recently completed Rhine-Danube Canal, improving connections between the Balkan region...
and the rest of Europe.

In the Balkan region, the three most prominent religions are: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Islam.

The Russian-style icon paintings originated when the Balkans were dominated by the Byzantine Empire.

After the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in the mid-15th century, Islam was, for many centuries, the dominant religion for most of the Balkan region. Unfortunately, the followers of these religions have rarely been able to coexist peacefully. More often, they clashed.

The word "Balkan" has become the synonym for religious intolerance and ethnic conflicts. This region has seen both throughout the 20th century, and the fall of communism, elsewhere in Europe celebrated with joy, triggered violent fighting in the Balkan region.

Yugoslavia fragmented into several smaller, unstable units. Thousands of refugees have been driven out of their homes and are on the move, facing an uncertain future.

For the people of this region, life is hard, even when the fighting stops and people return to their daily routines. It is an unfortunate situation for a region that was already the least developed part of Europe.

The Balkan region is rich in mineral deposits. Oil production started in Romania.

World War I was started in Sarajevo, when a young Serbian nationalist assassinated the heir to the Austrian throne.

Similarly, the fall of communism, elsewhere in Europe celebrated with joy, triggered violent fighting in the Balkan region.
long before the country could utilize modern technologies and remains an important industry here, in a modernized version, of course.

In the mountains of Bulgaria, near Velingrad, the quarries supply high-quality white and colored marble. It is cut and transported to a nearby factory. There it is further fabricated for construction and decoration.

Also in Bulgaria, in the town of Medet, copper ore is mined in large, open pits. Trucks take the ore to the furnaces, where it is smelted, concentrated, and finally, purified by electrolysis into the form of pure copper metal.

The most productive agriculture of the Balkan region is along the Danube River and other river valleys. Bulgaria is an important fruit and vegetable producer and exporter. Rose oil is a very special product which is used in the manufacture of perfumes and pharmaceuticals. It requires 2,000 rosebuds--which must be collected in the early morning dew--to produce one gram of rose oil. Bulgaria is the world's most important producer of rose oil, supplying about 80% of the world demand.

Even in modern towns and cities, there's a picturesque mixture of the new and the old. In many of the villages, people still live as their ancestors have lived for centuries. They practice a subsistence economy and produce most of what they need themselves. For these people, whose lives are sometimes harsh, religious faith
is often a vital key to their survival.

It gives them a sense of something beyond their everyday life and hope for a better future.

Varna, Bulgaria, along the coast of the Black Sea, is the biggest and busiest port in the Balkan region. It is also a popular area for tourist resorts.

The Golden Sands beaches are the most popular of all Black Sea resorts. The Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Church, commemorating the Russian victory over the Turks, stands in the center of Sofia.

Sofia, with over one million inhabitants, is the modern capital of Bulgaria. On the opposite side of the Balkan Peninsula, the Adriatic coast is an important gateway to the whole Mediterranean area. It has been inhabited since ancient times by the Romans, the Byzantines, the Venetians, and finally, the Slavic people. Dubrovnik is perhaps the best-known sea resort and tourist center on the Adriatic coast. Though proclaimed an important historical city preserve, it has suffered damage in the recent war. In the coastal area, tourists often represent the main source of income for local people.

Were it not for the war, the Adriatic coast would be a real tourist paradise. The Adriatic coast enjoys the warm and mild Mediterranean climate. A rich variety of subtropical vegetation prospers here, including grapes used in the cultivation of wine.

Most of the Balkan region is hilly and mountainous. Hidden high
in the Rila Mountains
is one
of the few places
where the ancient
Byzantine culture
has survived centuries
of foreign domination.

While under
Islamic rule,
Christians
at the Rila Monastery,
and everywhere else
in the region,
were forbidden
to use church bells.
A piece of wood
was used instead.
This tradition
is still observed,
perhaps
to commemorate the hardships
which many Balkan people
experience to this day.

Istanbul, Turkey--
the only city
in the world
which stands
on two continents.
Every morning,
thousands of commuters
cross the Bosporus Strait
from Asia,
where they live,
to the Golden Horn
in Europe,
where they go
to work.

Istanbul is a place
where Europe
meets the Orient--
both geographically
and culturally.

Fortification
of the shoreline
bears witness
to bloody conflicts
which were so common
in this region's past.
As seen from Asia,
Europe starts
just over this bridge.
But the Balkan region
is a part of Europe
riddled with conflict.
The many differences
among the peoples
often lead to hatred
and intolerance.
The prosperity
and cooperation
so important
to the rest of Europe
are sorely lacking here.
The people living
in the Balkan region
will have to put aside
their differences
if they are ever
to fully participate
in the world community.

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