ABSTRACT:

In the early 20th century, a great war in Europe seemed to be eminent. The European nations became entangled in a network of alliances, which, if maintained, would thrust most of the continent into an armed struggle. Coinciding with the general militarism of Europe was the fervent nationalism of the Balkans. Regarded as the “powder keg” of Europe these lands between the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, grew increasingly unstable as political tensions clashed. The nationalism of the Serbian people and the political and ethnic tensions within the Balkan region were what initiated the First World War. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary prompted the call to arms for an entire continent.

Serbia housed a great number of organizations that were meant to inspire unity among the Yugoslav peoples through both laudable cultural means and subversive revolutionary activity. Among the most important of these nationalistic societies were the National Defense Society, the Black Hand, and the Bosnian Youth. Each of these three groups played a vital role in the assassination in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. The National Defense was formed following the 1908 annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. In 1911, when army officers found the National Defense too passive in relations with the Dual Monarchy, they founded the Black Hand in Belgrade to incite revolutionary action. The Bosnian Youth changed into a more hostile organization following the Annexation Crisis, which impeded its desire to become incorporated into a greater Serbia.

By 1914, the fuel for the fire could be traced to the Serbian nationalistic societies. The actual spark was triggered by Gavrilo Princip when he assassinated the heir to the Austrian throne. Princip was a member of the Bosnian Youth who came in contact with the Black Hand in Belgrade as an émigré from Bosnia. The Black Hand provided him with the necessary weapons and encouragement to execute the plot. The National Defense gave the assassin the network of confidential agents required to cross the Bosnian frontier to Sarajevo where the murder was to take place. The contribution of the National Defense Society, the Black Hand, and the Bosnian Youth was of prime significance in the bringing about of the First World War.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BALKAN SITUATION PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I

The Balkans is a region in southeast Europe consisting of the lands on the peninsula between the Adriatic Sea in the West and the Aegean and Black Seas to the East. The area is mountainous and houses a diversity of peoples of various ethnicities. Within the Balkans is the country of Serbia. Prior to the First World War, as it still is today, Serbia was a politically unstable country where nationalistic enthusiasm ran strong in the mind-set of its people. Serbia aspired to become a great nation uniting all Yugoslav, or South Slavic, people. To accomplish the goal of a Greater Serbia, the Serbians had contrasting views. The tensions within Serbia and the Balkans and the disputes amongst Balkan nations caused the territory to be regarded as the “powder keg” of Europe.

Serbian nationalism was revived in 1844 when Ilija Garasanin, the Serbian Minister of Internal Affairs, developed Nacertanije, “The Program.” Since its implementation, Nacertanije influenced foreign and national policy. Garasanin’s Nacertanije called for a gradual expansion of Serbia that would unite all parts of Serbdom. Following the Constitution of 1858, the ideas of Nacertanije were brought into the National Assembly, or Skupshtina, and Nikola Pashitch’s Radical Party, which was established in 1881. The National Radical Party became known as the Old Radical Party following the 1903 coup d’état after which a new Independent Radical Party emerged. The period between 1903 and 1914 marked rejuvenation in Serbian nationalism. The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria, the First and Second Balkan Wars, and the birth and growth of cultural, revolutionary and nationalistic organizations directly affected the Balkans and the future role of Serbia in the region.

THE ASPIRATIONS OF SERBIA

In early twentieth-century Serbia, three political visions existed: a Greater Serbia, Yugoslavism, and a united and independent Slav Balkan Peninsula. The vision of a Greater Serbia, or Serbian Piedmontism, in which all Serbs would be united, was most attractive to Serbia. Serbia would act as the Piedmont of the Balkans and follow the ideas of Giuseppe Mazzini, who directed and guided...
the role of the Italian Piedmont (Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont) in achieving Italian Risorgimento (Unification). Greater Serbia would include Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia within Serbian domain.\(^2\) Yugoslavism called for the creation of Yugoslavia, a nation that would serve to unite all South Slavs. Croatians and the Serbian intelligentsia and youth were the prominent proponents of Yugoslavism. Croatia and Serbian political parties founded the Croato-Serbian Coalition in 1905. The coalition advocated *narodno jedinstvo*, or Croat-Serb “national unity,” and had a dislike of Austria-Hungary, the Dual Monarchy.\(^3\) The vision of a united Slav Balkan alliance that would include the Bulgarians was an ideal that could not be proved successful following the Second Balkan War.

**SERBIAN RELATIONS WITH THE DUAL MONARCHY**

Austria-Hungary hindered the realization of Serbian aspirations of a Greater Serbia. Through the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) against Turkey and Bulgaria, Serbia acquired Macedonia, Kosovo (Old Serbia), Metohija, and a part of the Sandžak of Novi Pazar. The population of Serbia increased from 2.9 million to 4.4 million as the size of Serbia increased 82 percent.\(^4\) Despite success in the Balkan Wars and the national pride it generated, Austria still kept Serbia from westward expansion toward the Adriatic Sea. Austria had occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1878, and annexed the provinces in October 1908. In the Annexation Crisis that ensued, Serbia was forced to make a humiliating statement in March 1909 that formally accepted Austria’s annexation, reduced its military, and altered the National Defense.

**THE NATIONAL DEFENSE SOCIETY**

The Austrian annexation actively motivated Serbia to firmly oppose the Dual Monarchy. In the midst of the Annexation Crisis, the National Defense Society, or Narodna Odbrana, was formed to take practical measures in preparation for war if the situation called for such action. Comprising the

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\(^4\) Petrovic, p. 607.
core of this Serbian association were prominent citizens including many army officials, civil servants, and politicians. The association enrolled and trained volunteers in order to strengthen Serbia. The National Defense was intended to serve to prevent, if possible, Austria’s annexation program. Some members were sent into the newly annexed territory to promote resistance to Austrian power through active propaganda of fervid Serbian nationalism.

Within weeks of the organization’s initiation, the committees formed totaled 220 and registered members totaled 5,000.\(^5\) The committees lied in or beside lands in Hapsburg or Ottoman rule. The Central Committee was headed by General Boža Jankovitch in Belgrade and was in charge of the work within the District Committees.\(^6\) The District Committees of the National Defense were based in prominent towns and managed cultural work, physical training, money collection, and relations with neighboring lands. Those who were not officers but were members of the National Defense were known as “confidential men.”\(^7\)

The association trained *comitadjis* in bomb throwing, the blowing up of railways and bridges, and various work to be done during the anticipated guerrilla war against Austria.\(^8\) Émigrés from Bosnia were enrolled and trained for treasonable activity upon their return to Bosnia. These émigrés were given financial assistance for their efforts and travels. The National Defense also gave assistance to Bosnian youths that came to Belgrade to study, prepare assassination attempts, or revolt against the Austrian government. The confidential men formed an underground network that conveyed propagandist literature, weapons, and conspirators across the frontier from Serbia into Bosnia.

However, the events of March 1909 would change the work of the National Defense in theory, but perhaps not in practice. When Serbia could no longer turn to Russia for support in the Annexation Crisis, Serbia had to accept terms presented by Austria. Austria pressured Serbia into making a statement in which it promised to cease subversive agitation and maintain normal relations with the

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7 Ibid., p. 81.
8 Ibid., p. 81.
Hapsburg Monarchy. The statement claimed that Serbia would “disarm and disband volunteers and their companies,” and would “not permit the formation of irregular units in their territory.”\(^9\) The National Defense ostensibly dedicated itself to laudable cultural aims including education, physical training, and the fostering of national ideals through education and propaganda.

Though its official report still proclaimed that “Austria is our greatest enemy,” it added by way of recapitulation: “While the National Defense works in conformity with the times according to the altered conditions, it also maintains all the connections made at the Annexation Period; today therefore it is the same as it was at the Annexation Period. . . . Then the cry was for war; now the cry is for work. Then meetings, demonstrations, volunteers, weapons, and bombs were asked for; today steady, fanatical, tireless work and again work is required to fulfill the tasks and duties to which we have drawn attention by way of present preparation for the fight with gun and cannon which will come.”\(^10\)

The National Defense maintained its intelligence network of confidential agents in Bosnia. This network would play a crucial role in the near future since it provided for the safe passage of assassins into Bosnia from Belgrade in the summer of 1914. But before this could happen, a number of events had to occur. Among these events was the creation of another, more violent, society, the Black Hand.

**THE BLACK HAND**

On May 9\(^{th}\), 1911, the constitution of a secret revolutionary society was created in Belgrade. The society consisted of army officials that had plotted and executed the assassination of Serbian King Aleksandar Obrenovitch and Queen Draga in a 1903 coup de état. The function of the society was outlined in a constitution of 37 articles. The aim of the organization was as follows:

Article 1: “The realization of the national ideal: the union of all Serbs.”

Article 2: “This organization prefers terrorist action to intellectual propaganda, and for this reason must be kept absolutely secret from non-members.”

Article 3: “The name of the organization is Ujedinjenje ili Smrt.”

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\(^9\) Judah, p. 95.

\(^10\) Fay, p. 84.
Article 4 detailed the operation of the society in the following five points:

(a) In accordance with its essential nature, it will influence Serbia, at official levels and throughout all classes of society, to become a Piedmont.
(b) It organizes revolutionary activity in all the lands inhabited by Serbs.
(c) Beyond the frontiers of Serbia, it fights with all means those who oppose this idea.
(d) It maintains friendly relations with all States, peoples, organizations, and private individuals who are friendly toward Serbia and the Serb element.
(e) It lends help and support in every way to all peoples and all organizations struggling for national liberation.\(^{11}\)

The Ujedinjenje ili Smrt, or “Unification or Death” was popularly known as the Black Hand, or Crna Ruka. The group was a society that openly opposed the parliamentary Pashitch government led by the Radical party. It considered the Serbian government to be cowardly and unpatriotic in its relations with Austria-Hungary. The society had a contrasting relationship with the National Defense. Although the Black Hand preferred revolutionary action to cultural work, the society used the intelligence network of the National Defense and consisted of members who were a part of both organizations.

The Black Hand had special codes detailed in its Rules and By-Laws, which gave it the air of a fearsome secret revolutionary organization. It had an official seal much like that of the Italian Carbonari of the previous century.\(^{12}\) The Black Hand possessed an ominous seal composed of a powerful arm bearing a flag, on which was engraved a skull and crossbones, a dagger, a hand-bomb, and a bottle of poison. Around the seal was the inscription “Unification or Death,” and on its base read “The Supreme Central Directorate.” In the ritualistic initiation ceremony new members had to make an oath of allegiance in a dark candle-lit room by a table draped in black cloth on which lay a cross, a dagger, and a revolver. A hooded and masked figure in black administered the oath.\(^{13}\)

Members were not generally known to each other personally, but were designated by secret numbers. Only the Central Committee at Belgrade was to know their names. As Article 30 stated,

\(^{11}\) Petrovich, p. 609.
\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 609.
\(^{13}\) Fay, p. 88.
“The interests of the organization are to be put above all others. Every member on entering the organization must realize that by this act he forfeits his own personality and that he can expect within it neither glory nor personal profit.”\textsuperscript{14} If any member exploited the organization, the punishment would be death.

The primary leader of the Black Hand was Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijevitch. Dimitrijevitch was known by the pseudonym Apis, the sacred bull of the ancient Egyptians.\textsuperscript{15} In 1913 Dimitrijevitch became the newly appointed Chief of Intelligence of the Serbian General Staff. Through this position, Dimitrijevitch was able to utilize the network of confidential agents of the National Defense for his own purposes.

Ljubomir Jovanovitch, also known as Čupa (tousled hair), was the chief editor of \textit{Pijemont}, the society’s newspaper, or organ.\textsuperscript{16} By disseminating the ideas of the organization, \textit{Pijemont} became a predominant source of Serbian propaganda that did not fail in ridiculing the Serbian government. For instance, \textit{Pijemont} referred to Pashitch’s Radical Party as “a gang of men without conscience, who are attacking not only the purse of the people and state funds, but also our army.”\textsuperscript{17} This statement was ironic since the publication of \textit{Pijemont} was made possible through the embezzling of army funds.

Following the Balkan Wars in the spring of 1914, opinion in Serbia was divided over how to control the newly acquired lands in Macedonia and Old Serbia. The Pashitch government and the Black Hand had divergent motives and fell into a partisan struggle. The former preferred that the annexed lands be placed under civilian control, whereas the latter demanded that the military should implement control. This conflict was known as the “Priorities Question,” and it caused tumult in the Serbian government and Pashitch’s Radical Party.\textsuperscript{18} Military officials, many of whom belonged to the Black Hand, were disappointed when the Radical Party failed to extend Serbia’s constitution to the lands seized from Turkey. As the military vied for control of the lands, Pashitch resigned as Serbian

\textsuperscript{14} Petrovich, p. 610.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 608.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 608.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 610.
\textsuperscript{18} Petrovich, p. 610.
Premier on June 2, 1914. Pashitch wished to dissolve the National Assembly and hold a general election to resolve the problem. King Peter made Pashitch withdraw his resignation on June 11th. Citing poor health King Peter, also, stepped down and appointed his son Alexander, as Prince-Regent. As this was occurring, preparations of an assassination attempt on the Austrian heir to the throne were being made in Belgrade. On June 28, 1914, a nineteen-year-old member of a Bosnian revolutionary group, Gavrilo Princip, would succeed in executing the assassination in Sarajevo.

THE BOSNIAN YOUTH

Back in 1893 at a boarding school in Mostar, Bosnia, a group of teenage schoolboys was to create the organization that would ignite the “powder keg” of the Balkans into a global war. The Bosnian Youth, or Mlada Bosna, derived its title from the name the father of Italian unification, Giuseppe Mazzini, designated to his nationalistic organization in 1831, Young Italy, or Giovine Italia. Dissatisfied with the bourgeoisie and politicians, the Bosnian Youth enrolled members from and catered to the educated youth of Bosnia. Members included many high school students and others from the “small and insignificant classes” of peasants, journeymen, schoolteachers, and sons of priests.19 The group sought land reforms until the Russian Revolution of 1905 altered its objectives. These youths discovered the ideas of socialist revolution and anarchy from Russian literature, especially the writings of Herzen and Kropotkin.20 Following the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 by Austria, the Bosnian Youth developed the “cult of the individual deed.”21 Terrorist acts of assassination now became the means by which to incite change. The Bosnian Youth were serious in its purpose as demonstrated by its actions in the years after the Annexation Crisis.

The Bosnian Youth found that acts of revolutionary terrorism stirred panic within civilian authorities and uplifted the national spirit of the masses. In 1910, a graduate of the Mostar high school, a peasant’s son named Bogdan Zherajitch, tried to shoot the Hapsburg governor, but failed.22 After

19 Fay, p. 95.
20 Ibid., p. 95.
21 Ibid., p. 95.
22 Fay, p. 96.
firing five shots at Governor Verashanin, Zherajitch then committed suicide. A future member of the
Black Hand had trained Zherajitch in revolver practice. In Bosnia and Serbia, Zherajitch was hailed as
a hero and martyr. His grave was kept fresh with flowers and became a place of pilgrimage for
Bosnian youths filled with nationalistic fanaticism. On the evening before the assassination of
Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Princip is said to have placed flowers on Zherajitch’s grave and to have
sworn by it that his hand should not waver the following day.23

The man most influential in propagating the Bosnian revolutionary movement and in assisting
the Bosnian students in their plot against the Archduke was Vladimir Gatichinovitch.24 During the
Annexation Crisis in 1909, Gatichinovitch visited Belgrade where he came into contact with the
leaders of the National Defense and with the impatient future members of the Black Hand.
Gatichinovitch published articles in the newspaper organ of the Black Hand, the Pijemont. In 1912, he
became involved in the Black Hand after finding the National Defense too passive. Gatichinovitch was
responsible for reorganizing the Bosnian Youth in a way similar to the structure of the Black Hand.

The Bosnian Youth was organized into secret revolutionary “circles” known as Kruzhoci,
“small groups of trustworthy persons, who do not know each other, but are in touch with one another
through intermediaries.”25 These Kruzhoci gave the Black Hand a network of affiliated groups
distributed throughout Bosnia. The members of the Bosnian Youth were not necessarily regular
members of the Black Hand, but they could be used by the latter group for revolutionary and terrorist
actions within Bosnia. The revolutionary circles of the Bosnian Youth were found in all Bosnian
towns having secondary schools. The most prominent, though, was found in the home of Danilo Ilitch
in Sarajevo. Yugoslav journalist Borivoje Jevtitch and member of the Serbian Youth, or Srpska
Omladina, remarked that “Through it passed all that was most revolutionary. It was, in a way, the
leading organ of all the nationalistic currents in the country. Its relations, direct and indirect, with the
émigrés in Belgrade were very close.”26

23 Ibid., p. 96.
24 Ibid., p. 97.
26 Fay, p. 100.
The Bosnian Youth saw in Archduke Franz Ferdinand the possibility of the implementation of “Trialist” policy. “Trialism” envisioned the formation of one united Slav kingdom that would share equal status with the Austrian and Hungarian lands.\(^{27}\) The Slavic kingdom would include Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aspiration of a Greater Serbia could not be realized if the lands possessed by Austria-Hungary were further incorporated into the Austrian Empire with a higher status. Franz Ferdinand was both a sympathizer of the Roman Catholic Croats and an advocate of the “Trialist” solution. His views, although in favor of the Slavs, ran contrary to Serbia’s religious and nationalistic ideals. An assassination would impede the Dual Monarchy from tightening its grasp on Balkan lands.

**THE ASSASSINATION PLOT**

The actual formation of the assassination plot against the Austrian heir to the throne occurred in the winter of 1914. In January, Gatichinovitch met with Princip and Ilitch where they decided to assassinate an Austrian official.\(^{28}\) The trio could not come to a consensus as to whether to kill Franz Ferdinand or General Potiorek, the Hapsburg Governor of Bosnia. In February, Princip, having decided to kill the former, traveled to Belgrade where he came into contact with Ciganovitch and Major Tankositch of the Black Hand.\(^{29}\) In Belgrade, the three met regularly in coffee-houses and received information from a local newspaper that the Archduke was visiting Bosnia in the summer. The inspiration from the plot came from young Bosnian revolutionaries that had been in close contact with the Black Hand in Belgrade.

In March 1914, a newspaper announced that the Austrian army would hold military maneuvers in Bosnia just outside of Sarajevo on the Drin River. The Archduke was to oversee the maneuvers of the XV\(^{th}\) and XVI\(^{th}\) Army Corps as Inspector-in-Chief of the Army.\(^{30}\) The Sarajevo *Krzhoc* brought the article to the attention of Nedjelko Chabrinovitch, a Bosnian émigré, who passed it on to Princip at


\(^{28}\) Fay, p. 111.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 111.

\(^{30}\) Fay, p. 45.
a coffee-house they both frequented. Three Bosnian émigrés Chabrinovitch, Princip, and another student and Bosnian Youth member, Trifko Grabezh, contacted Black Hand member Milan Ciganovitch. Ciganovitch made it his duty to procure the arms to be used in the assassination. To do this, he turned to Major Tankositch of the Black Hand. Colonel Dimitrijevitch provided the money to purchase the revolvers. Ciganovitch informed the youths of the “tunnel,” or underground railway, by which Serbian officials would aid in their journey over the frontier and put them in touch with “confidential men” in Bosnia. Ciganovitch gave the students instructions as to grenade use and revolver practice at the Topčider range near Belgrade.

Three weeks prior to the arrival of the Archduke in Bosnia, the three assassins left Belgrade for Sarajevo. Ciganovitch had provided them with six bombs from his room, four Browning pistols and ammunition, 150 dinars in cash, and some cyanide of potassium with which they were to commit suicide after killing the Archduke. The bombs and revolvers were obtained from the arsenal at Kragujevac. The Black Hand wished to avoid any confessions that would incriminate the Serbian officers in Belgrade who helped in preparing the plot against the Archduke. The Bosnian youths were given a map marking the roads they were to take and the Austrian gendarmerie stations they were to avoid.

Nedjelko Chabrinovitch, Gavrilo Princip and Trifko Grabezh were able to successfully enter Bosnia and reach Sarajevo without being caught by Austrian officials. The assassins managed to do this by use of the “tunnel” that had been placed in Bosnia by the National Defense. “Confidential men” provided the youths with the protection required in transporting the bombs and revolvers from Belgrade to Sarajevo. On the morning of June 28th, 1914, the youths divided the arms among themselves. Princip took a Browning revolver; Chabrinovitch took a bomb; and Grabezh took both a revolver and a bomb.33

31 Ibid., p. 114.
32 Ibid., p. 117.
33 Fay, p. 121.
THE ASSASSINATION OF ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND

June 28th, 1914 happened to be the Serbia’s national day, Vidov-Dan, the Feast of Saint Vitus and the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. The day would also mark the assassination of the Austrian Heir to the Throne. The Archduke, his wife, Sophie Chotek, and General Potiorek were together in an automobile procession down the Appel Quay to Town Hall. Danilo Ilitch had recruited additional men to join in the assassination plot and provided them with bombs and revolvers from Belgrade hours before the arrival of the Archduke. Mehmedbashih, Vaso Chubrilovitch and Chabrinovitch stood alongside the Miljachka River. Ilitch and Popovitch were across the street. Further down the Quay were Princip, Chabrinovitch, and Grabazh.

Franz Ferdinand reached Sarajevo at about 10:00 A.M. after reviewing troops in the nearby town of Ildzze. Nedjelko Chabrinovitch made the first attempt on the life of the Archduke as his auto passed the Cumurja Bridge. The bomb bounced off the back of the car and injured the members of the following automobile when it detonated. Provisions were made to alter the planned route as they departed from the Town Hall following the proceedings and formalities. The autos were to travel down the Appel Quay instead of the narrower Franz Josef Street. As Archduke Ferdinand departed Town Hall, Princip was awaiting him at across from the Lateiner Bridge. The chauffeur was unaware of the change of route and turned into Franz Joseph Street. As the chauffeur stopped to get back onto the Appel Quay at 10:45 A.M., Princip stepped forward and fired two shots from point blank range. The first fatally wounded the Archduke in the neck. The other, perhaps intended for General Potiorek, entered the abdomen of the Archduke’s wife. Both the Archduke and his wife, Sophie Chotek, were killed. Police arrested Princip before he could poison himself. Austria became filled with immediate indignation over the matter and blamed the Serbian government.

34 Ibid., p. 121.
35 Ibid., pp. 121-122.
36 Ibid. p. 124.
REACTION TO THE ASSASSINATION

On July 26th, the Austrian government presented Serbia with a ten-point ultimatum that needed to be responded to within 48 hours. The second point read: “To dissolve the Narodna Odbrana and to suppress similar societies in future.” The ultimatum never mentioned the role of the Black Hand, but demanded that the Narodna Odbrana, or National Defense, be effectively dissolved. Austrian intelligence must have presented Austrian officials with incorrect information regarding the affiliation of the assassins with nationalistic societies. Indeed, the Black Hand and the Bosnian Youth were more heavily responsible for the assassination.

In response to the Austrian ultimatum, Serbia accepted eight of the points to the word and two others with reservations. Prince-Regent Alexander wrote that Serbia was “prepared to accept those Austro-Hungarian demands which are in keeping with the position of an independent country.” This would not suffice for the Austrian government, which was searching for an excuse to wage war on Serbia. Foreign Minister Count Leopold von Berchtold and the Vienna war party pushed Austria into war. The Berlin government offered Austria backing through the infamous “blank check”. By the end of July 1914, the First World War first began as Austria invaded Serbia.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CULPABILITY OF SERBIAN NATIONALISTIC SOCIETIES IN THE ASSASSINATION

The assessment of the guilt of certain parties over the assassination has been subjected to extensive debate and scrutiny among historians and scholars. The National Defense cannot be regarded as exempt from culpability in the assassination of the Archduke. Though not directly involved, the society provided indirect support for the would-be assassins. The assassins used the underground network of “confidential men” to cross the frontier into Bosnia. Without the “tunnels” created by the National Defense in the prior decade, the assassins may not have successfully made their journey from Belgrade to Sarajevo.

37 Singleton, p. 118.
38 Petrovic, p. 615.
39 Ibid. p. 618.
The Black Hand and the Bosnian Youth worked together to both plot and execute the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The Black Hand provided the Bosnian émigrés with encouragement, guidance, and inspiration. The weapons used in the attack in Sarajevo came directly from the Black Hand headquarters in Belgrade. Training in bomb and pistol use was given to Princip, Chabrinovitch, and Grabez. The Black Hand gave the Bosnian revolutionaries the instruction they needed in order to execute the assassination plot.

Within the Bosnian Youth is found the integral members of the assassination. Each of the seven potential assassins was directly affiliated with the organization. At least three of these, Princip, Chabrinovitch, and Grabez, were, also, indirectly affiliated with the Black Hand. These three became Bosnian émigrés that traveled to Belgrade where their revolutionary spirit was heightened. When Princip and Chabrinovitch returned to Bosnia, they were the only two to make an attempt on the life of the Archduke. Princip, a Bosnian Youth member, was responsible for the killing of both the Archduke and his wife of June 28th, 1914.

The National Defense, Black Hand, and Bosnian Youth were integral in providing for the means by which the assassination of Franz Ferdinand was executed. The National Defense made a safe passage into Bosnia available to the assassins. The Black Hand trained, armed, and dispatched the young Bosnians plotting the murder of the Archduke. The assassin who was successful in achieving his purpose was a principal member of the Bosnian Youth. Considering the volatile Balkan situation in 1914, the assassination was the spark that ignited the “powder keg” of the Balkans. The fuel for the fire of the First World War could be traced to three Serbian nationalistic societies.
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