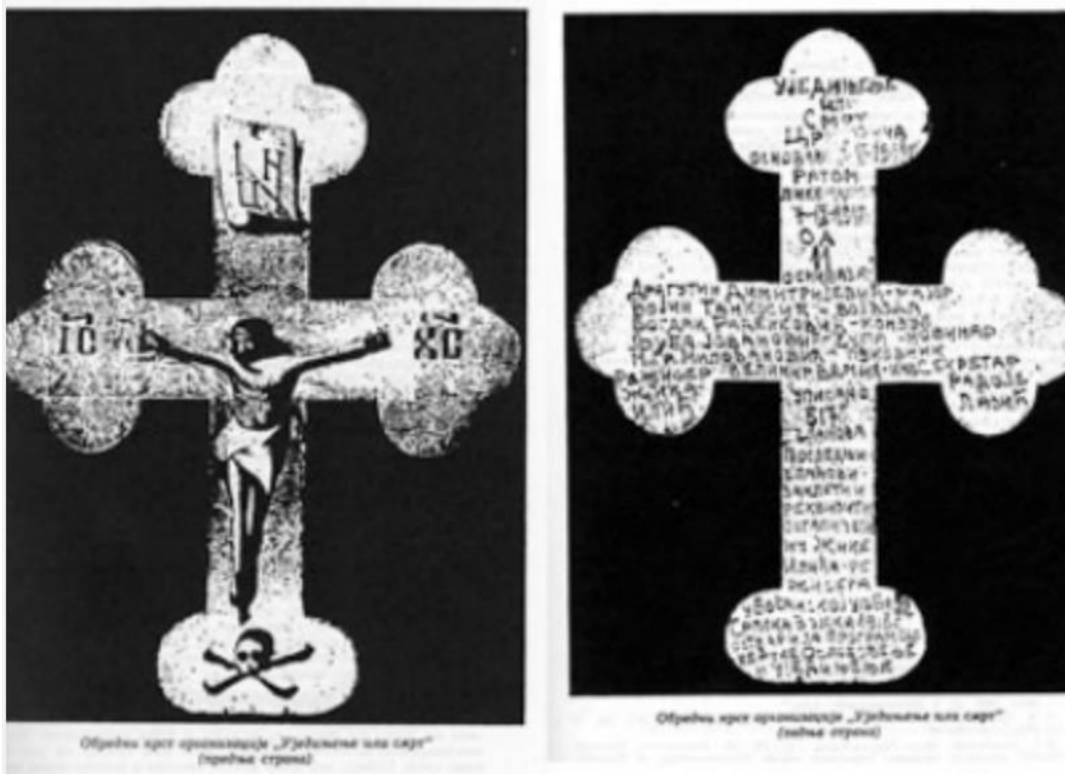


The Black Hand

"Unification or Death."

-Black Hand Motto

The Black Hand was a Serbian nationalist group-founded on May 9th, 1911 when 10 men signed an official constitution. This group eventually assassinated Archduke Ferdinand, leading in part to WWI



Above: Black Hand ritual cross Source: Public Domain

Below : The black Hand's constitution, signed by the 10 executives. Source: Public Domain

Dragutin Dimitrijević

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Colonel Dragutin "Apis" Dimitrijević was the mastermind behind the secret group; he personally organized the brutal killing of King Aleksandar Obrenović in 1903. Dimitrijević graduated at the top of his class and was considered to have excellent leadership ability, he was immediately installed in the general staff of the Serbian army.

"After their deaths the terrorists mutilated the bodies, ripping off limbs and throwing them out of a palace window."

-Christine Godfrey (Oswego Historical Review, 2009)

Dimitrijević personally organized the brutal killing of King Aleksandar Obrenović in 1903, where he was shot three times, the bullets never to be removed from his body. He was notorious for planning everything, but was never seen.

"...One saw him nowhere, yet one knew that he was doing everything..."

-Anonymous friend of Dimitrijević, ca. 1915

Below: A young Apis. source: public domain



Joining the black hand



Above: Dragutin Dimitrijević Source: Bp.Blogspot.com

Members were seated in a dark room, with a knife to their back and a pistol to their head and told to recite the oath of secrecy:

"...before God, on my honor and my life, that I will execute all missions and commands without question. I swear before God, on my honor and on my life, that I will take all

The Narodna Odbrana

The Narodna Odbrana, the father group of the Black Hand, boasted 2500 members who were ready to defend Serbia at a moment's notice. This group supported the Black Hand through funds it received from the government.

the secrets of this organization into my grave with me."

-Section IV, Article 35
Black Hand Constitution,
1911

Below: Black Hand emblem, Source:
mysteryhistory.tv



The Black Hand's power structure

The Black Hand consisted of a pyramid of separate member "cells". The top cell was the 10-member executive committee (including Dragutin Dimitrijević), followed by the Central committee, district committee, and finally five member cells that carried out the assignments. *"The members of the group rarely knew people other than the ones in their cell and one member superior to them; this would ensure that the identities of the leaders were kept secret."* -Christine Godfrey (Oswego Historical Review, 2009)

