

### Militarism: Anglo-German arms race

*The militarism leading up to World War I did not only involve the massive build-up of new weapons like dreadnoughts. It also involved Europe's attitude towards war. During the early 1900s, many governments pursued a policy of glorifying military power, and having a large and strong army made citizens feel patriotic. Below are two views on militarism prior to World War I.*



The building of *Dreadnought* coincided with increasing tension between the United Kingdom and Germany. Germany had begun to build a large battlefleet in the 1890s, as part of a deliberate policy to challenge British naval supremacy. It became increasingly clear that the United Kingdom's principal naval enemy would be Germany, which was building up a large, modern fleet. This rivalry gave rise to the two largest dreadnought fleets of the pre-war period.<sup>[92]</sup>

The first German response to *Dreadnought* came with the *Nassau* class, laid down in 1907. This was followed by the *Helgoland* class in 1909. Together with two battlecruisers, these classes gave Germany a total of ten modern capital ships built or building in 1909. While the British ships were somewhat faster and more powerful than their German equivalents, a 12:10 ratio fell far short of the 2:1 ratio that the Royal Navy wanted to maintain.<sup>[93]</sup>

In 1909, the British Parliament authorized an additional four capital ships, holding out hope Germany would be willing to negotiate a treaty about battleship numbers. If no such solution could be found, an additional four ships would be laid down in 1910. Even this compromise solution meant (when taken together with some social reforms) raising taxes enough to prompt a constitutional crisis in the United Kingdom in 1909–10. In 1910, the British eight-ship construction plan went ahead, including four *Orion*-class super-dreadnoughts, and augmented by battlecruisers purchased by Australia and New Zealand. In the same period of time, Germany laid down only three ships, giving the United Kingdom a superiority of 22 ships to 13.

The dreadnought race stepped up in 1910 and 1911, with Germany laying down four capital ships each year and the United Kingdom five. Tension came to a head following the German Naval Law of 1912. This proposed a fleet of 33 German battleships and battlecruisers, outnumbering the Royal Navy in home waters. To make matters worse for the United Kingdom, the Imperial Austro-Hungarian Navy was building four dreadnoughts, while the Italians had four and were building two more. Against such threats, the Royal Navy could no longer guarantee vital British interests. The United Kingdom was faced with a choice of building more battleships, withdrawing from the Mediterranean, or seeking an alliance with France. Further naval construction was unacceptably expensive at a time when social welfare provision was making calls on the budget. Withdrawing from the Mediterranean would mean a huge loss of influence, weakening British diplomacy in the Mediterranean and shaking the stability of the British Empire. The only acceptable option, and the one recommended by First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, was to break with the policies of the past and make an arrangement with France. The French would assume responsibility for checking Italy and Austria-Hungary in the Mediterranean, while the British would protect the north coast of France. In spite of some opposition from British politicians, the Royal Navy organised itself on this basis in 1912.

In spite of these important strategic consequences, the 1912 Naval Law had little bearing on the battleship force ratios. The United Kingdom responded by laying down ten new super-dreadnoughts in

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its 1912 and 1913 budgets—ships of the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Revenge* classes, which introduced a further step change in armament, speed and protection—while Germany laid down only five, concentrating resources on the Army.

*“The entire able-bodied populations of Europe are preparing to massacre one another. Though no one wants to attack, and everybody professes (states) his love of peace and the determination to maintain it, the whole world feels that it only requires some unforeseen incident, some unpreventable accident, for the spark to fall in a flash and blow all Europe sky-high.”*

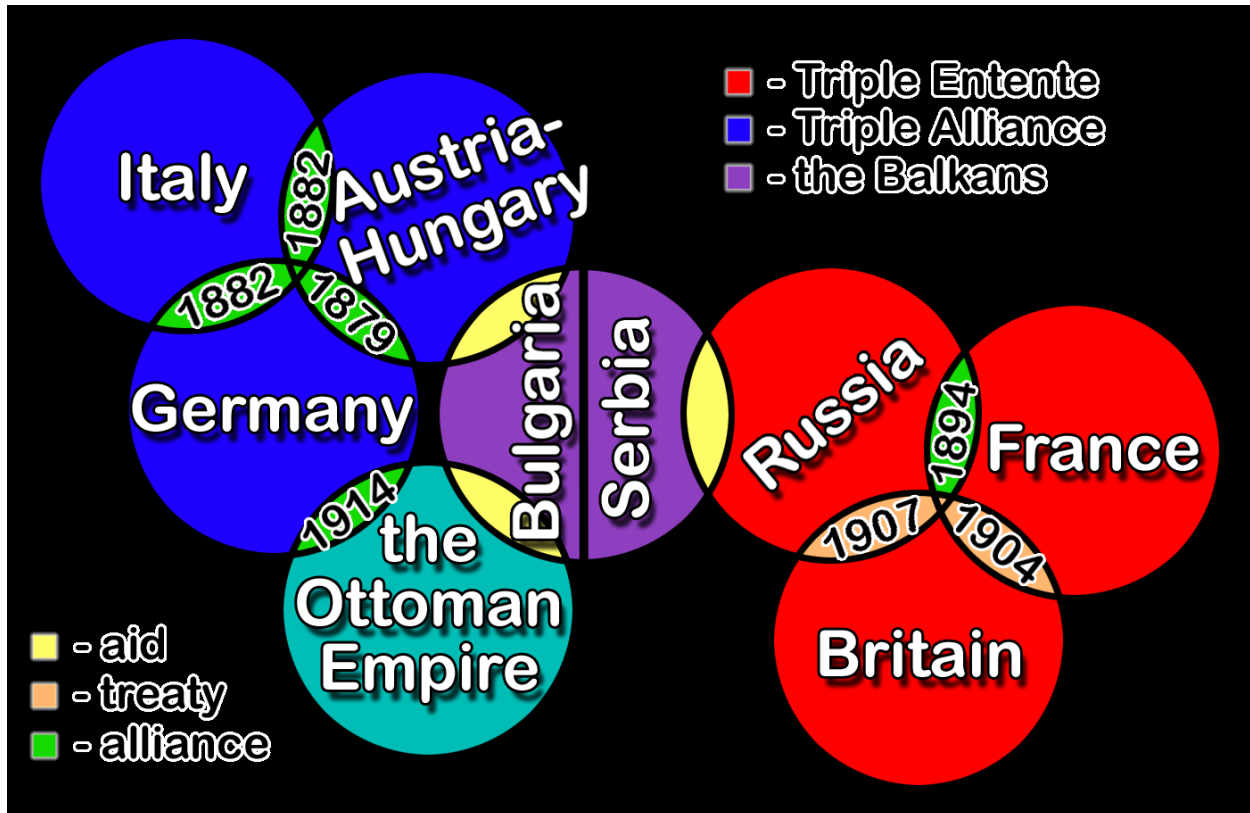
—Frederic Passy, French peace activist, 1895

*“This desire for peace has rendered most civilized nations weak. War is a biological necessity of the first importance, a regulative element in the life of mankind. It cannot be dispensed with. Without it an unhealthy development will follow, which will prevent every advancement of real civilization. War is the father of all things.”*

—General Treitschke, German military commander, 1899

### ALLIANCES

An alliance is an agreement made between two or more countries to give each other help if it is needed. Prior to the start of World War I, Europe divided into two solid alliance blocks: Germany and Austria-Hungary on one side, Britain, France, and Russia on the other. Below is a diagram of the two main alliances, known as the **Triple Alliance** and the **Triple Entente**, as well as an excerpt from the treaty that formed the Triple Alliance.



“ARTICLE 3. If one, or two, of the Contracting Parties should be attacked and become engaged in a war with one or more Great Powers (*France, Britain, Russia*), all Contracting Parties shall be bound to lend help and assistance with all their forces.”—**Article III of the Triple Alliance**

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### **Imperialism:**

*During the 1800s, European countries like Britain and France created massive empires that spanned the world. These empires provided their home countries with natural resources, economic power, and international prestige. By the 1900s, fierce rivalries had developed between these European empires. In a speech to the Reichstag (the German congress) in December of 1899, the German politician Bernhard von Bülow speaks of Germany's place in this imperialist world.*

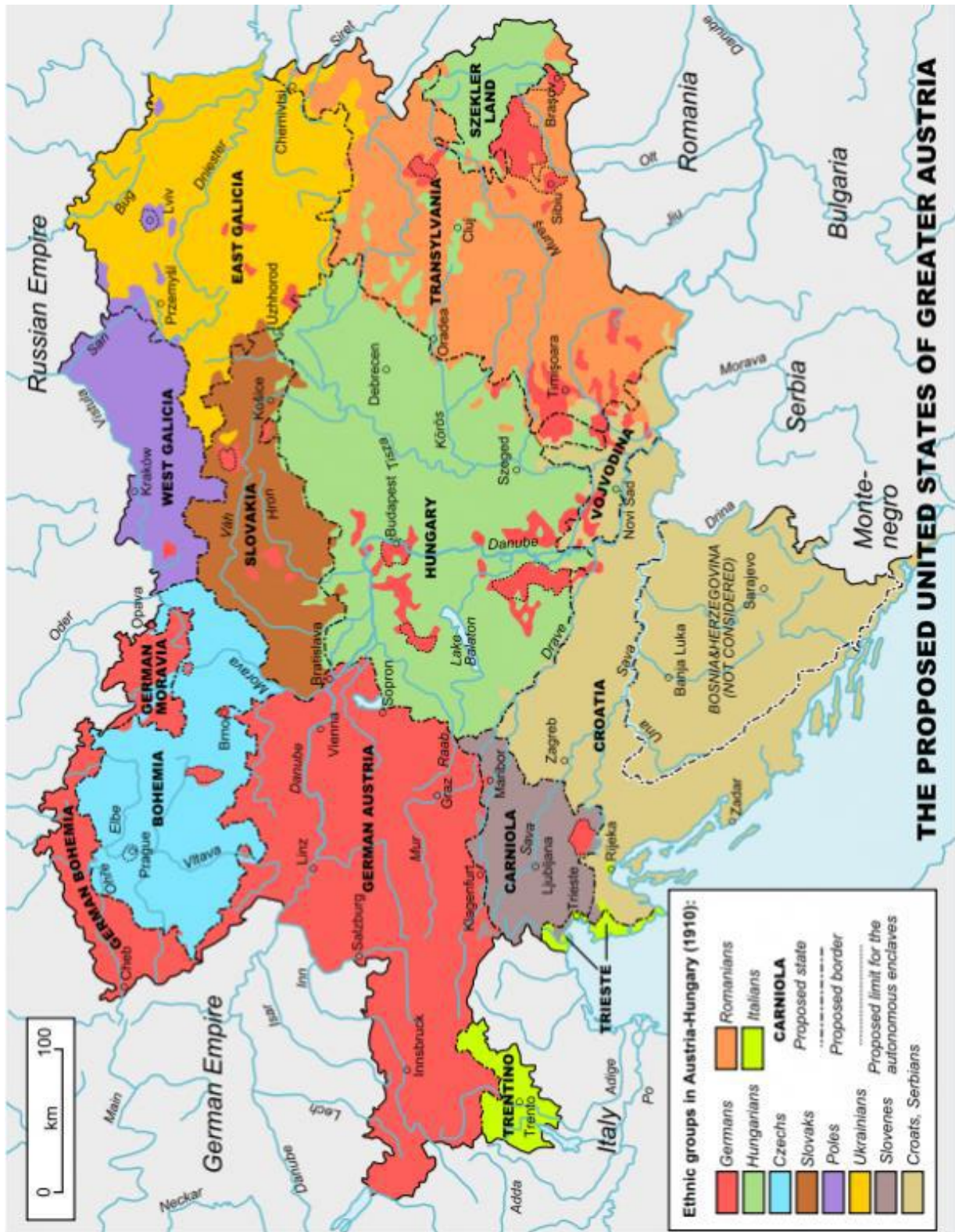
"In the nineteenth century (1800s) England has increased its colonial empire further and further. The French have put down roots in North Africa and East Africa and created for themselves a new empire in the Far East. Russia has begun its mighty path of victory in Asia.

The English prime minister said a long time ago that the strong states were getting stronger and stronger and the weak ones were getting weaker and weaker. We don't want to step on the toes of any foreign power, but at the same time we don't want our own feet stepped on by any foreign power, and we don't intend to be shoved aside by any foreign power. If the English speak of a 'Greater Britain;' if the French speak of a 'New France;' if the Russians take over Asia; then we also have the right to a greater Germany! In the coming century the German people will be a hammer or an anvil. One hits, the other is hit.

We cannot stand inactive on the side anymore. We cannot for the simple reason that we now have interests in all parts of the world. The rapid growth of our population, the unprecedented blossoming (*growing*) of our industries, the hard work of our merchants, and the mighty vitality (*energy*) of the German people have woven (*tied*) us into the world economy and pulled us into international politics."

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## Nationalism:



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*Nationalism began to develop in Europe during the 1800s. By the 1900s, many smaller European countries that were part of large empires began to experience Nationalism as well. The Balkans region of Austrian Empire was a particularly tense spot. It was home to a large amount of ethnic groups and had a history of uprisings. Below is a map of the ethnicities in the Austrian Empire (each color is a different group of people), as well as the oath of the Black Hand, a secret nationalist society founded in Serbia in 1908. At this time, Serbians were one of the groups controlled by the Austrian Empire.*

*"I, Milan Vasitch, by entering into the organization, do hereby swear by the blood of my forefathers, by my honor, by my life, and by all Serbs, that from this moment onward and until my death I shall faithfully serve this organization to achieve the unification of the Serbs and the creation of a Serbian Nation-State. I shall at all times be prepared to make any sacrifice for it. Unification or death!"*

-- Milan Vasitch, Oath of the Black Hand, 1908

### Spark: Gavrilo Princip and the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand



Gavrilo Princip (1894-1918) was born in June or July 1894, the son of a postman. One of nine children, six of whom died in infancy, Princip's health was poor from an early age: his eventual death was caused by tuberculosis. After attending schools in Sarajevo and Tuzla, Princip left for Belgrade in May 1912. While in Serbia Princip joined the secret Black Hand society, a nationalist movement favouring a union between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.

Princip was one of three men sent by Dragutin Dimitrijevic, the chief of the Intelligence Department in the Serbian Army and head of the Black Hand, to assassinate Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, during his visit to Sarajevo on 28 June 1914. Ferdinand had accepted the invitation of General Oskar Potiorek to inspect army manoeuvres in his capacity of Inspector General of the army. The other men sent to assassinate Ferdinand were Nedjelko Cabrinovic, and Trifko Grabez.

The three men were instructed to commit suicide after killing the Archduke. To this end they were each given a phial of cyanide, along with a revolver and grenades. Each of the men suffered from tuberculosis and consequently knew that they did not have long to live; meanwhile, Dimitrijevic did not wish any of the men to live to tell who was behind the assassination.

The prime minister of Serbia was given advance warning of the assassination plot, and whilst a sympathiser of the Black Hand's objectives - Bosnia-Herzegovina achieving independence from Austro-Hungary - he feared war with Austria-Hungary should an assassination attempt be successful. He therefore gave orders for the arrest of the three men as they left the country; his orders were not acted upon however.

Once in Bosnia-Herzegovina the three men met up with six fellow conspirators and travelled onwards to Sarajevo.

Franz Ferdinand arrived in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, a Sunday, and was met at the railway station by General Potiorek, to be taken on to the city hall for the reception and speeches.

Seven members of the Black Hand lined the route due to be taken by the Archduke's cavalcade along Appel Quay. One of the men, Nedjelko Cabrinovic, threw a grenade at the Archduke's car. The driver took evasive action and quickly sped from the scene. The grenade bounced off the back of the Archduke's car and rolled underneath the next car, exploding seconds later; two of its occupants were severely wounded.

Cabrinovic swallowed his cyanide capsule as instructed, and jumped into the River Miljacka. He did not die however, but was captured and arrested. It is speculated that the capsule contained nothing other than a harmless water-based solution.

Ferdinand attended the reception at the city hall and complained vociferously about his reception at the city. Following the reception the Archduke determined to visit those injured in the grenade explosion at the city hospital. General Potiorek decided that the motorcade should take an alternate route to the hospital, avoiding the city centre altogether. However the driver of Ferdinand's car, Franz Urban, was not informed of the change of plan and so took the original route.

Turning into Franz Joseph Street, General Potiorek, who was a passenger in Ferdinand's car, noticed that the altered route had not been taken. He remonstrated with the driver who in turn slowed the car and then began to reverse out of the street.

Gavrilo Princip, who happened to be in Franz Joseph Street at a cafe, seized his opportunity, and took aim at Ferdinand from a distance of five feet. His bullets struck the Archduke in the neck and his wife, Sophie, who was travelling with him, in the abdomen.



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Urban drove the car to the governor's residence at Konak; the couple died soon afterwards. After the shooting Princip made to turn his gun upon himself but was seized and restrained by a man nearby, aided by several policemen. He was arrested and taken to a police station.

In total eight men were charged with treason and Franz Ferdinand's murder. However under Austro-Hungarian law capital punishment could not be applied to anyone under the age of 20 when the crime was committed. Gavrilo Princip, whose precise date of birth could not be firmly established at his trial, was therefore imprisoned for the maximum duration, twenty years. He died however of tuberculosis on 28 April 1918.

**Weather Forecast:**  
Showers Tonight; Fair Monday  
Full Report on Page Three

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## SERB STUDENT ASSASSINATES ARCHDUKE AND HIS DUCHESS

**CAPT. HOPKINS CHARGES LETTERS WERE STOLEN AS PART OF CONSPIRACY**  
Lawyer intimates Cientifico Plot to Suppress Success of Carranza Revolution—Readily Admits Friendship for Enemies of Huerta.

**NEWMAN TO FILE MOTION FOR NEW TRIAL WEDNESDAY**  
Three Grounds for Setting Aside Verdict in Quaker Suit Are Alleged.

**FALL VICTIMS TO ASSASSIN**

**SEVEN PASSENGERS FLY THROUGH AIR WITH LIEUT. PORTE**  
Trans-Atlantic Flight Plans Advanaced by Almost Perfect Behavior of the Marconi.

**BOMB HURLED INTO CARRIAGE FAILS TO EXPLODE, USES PISTOL**  
Fires Several Shots, All of Which Lodged in Vital Parts, and Francis Ferdinand of Austria and Sophie Chotek, His Morganatic Wife, Were Found to Have Been Killed Instantly.



**VIENNA, June 28.—**The Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the archduchess were assassinated today as they were leaving the Serbian capital of Sarajevo. The assassin, a Serbian student of eighteen, first hurled a bomb into the carriage. This took no effect. He then opened fire on the royal couple with a revolver. He fired several shots, all of which lodged in vital points and the archduke and duchess were found to have been killed instantly. The assassin was arrested after being attacked by a mob and has been placed in jail. He had been banished from Bosnia. The Austrian cabinet has been summoned to Vienna and are now in session. The archduchess, Sophie Chotek, was the archduke's morganatic wife. She belonged to one of the oldest noble families of Bohemia, but her rank was far below that of the imperial house of Hapsburg. After the archduke had married her, he swore in the presence of the Emperor, all the princes of the house of Hapsburg, the cardinals of Vienna, and the high dignitaries of the dual empires of Austria and Hungary, that he would

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