# Introduction

Few people had the chance to travel legally to and from Habsburg-occupied Serbia during the years between 1916 and 1918. But the chargé d'affaires of the Swiss Embassy in Vienna, Karl Egger, had just such an opportunity. While the Habsburg Military General Government of Serbia preferred that few people, if any, visit occupied Serbia, Egger came and was treated to the hospitality of the Habsburg Army during his trip. Yes, he wrote back to Bern, he understood that the Germans had taken everything they could from the country during the invasion a few months earlier. Habsburg officers told him this at dinner. Yes, the Habsburg Army had faced Serb civilian fighters all over the country. It required executions, tragic but necessary. Likewise, Habsburg officers explained this to him over a meal. Now he sat in the elegantly appointed office of the Habsburg military governor of Serbia, General Johannes Freiherr Salis von Seewische, the last stop before his return to Vienna (see Figure 1). Salis calmly explained that Russia's recent gains in the Brusilov offensive raised the possibility of instability in Serbia. While Egger did not directly refer to this, his portrayal of Salis conjured up the picture of an immaculately dressed and confident Salis reclining in self-satisfied comfort. Unfortunately, Salis informed Egger, it might "be necessary that here and there we will have to retaliate." Salis' ancestors came from Switzerland and he hoped that his fellow Swiss would not attack him when "he lets a dozen Serbs hang." "The Serbs," he explained, "need an iron fist."[1]

That fist to which Salis so flippantly and almost proudly referred was, however, a uniquely Habsburg fist. Salis' self-assured boasting also testified to his confidence in this Habsburg fist. The Habsburg Army's war and occupation in Serbia, which are the foci of this book, were part of a broader attempt to reassert the values of bureaucratic absolutism in the Empire as a whole. The

1 Bern, Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv, Schweizerische Gesandtschaft in Wien to the Politisches Department, "Bericht über Zustände in Serbien," June 25, 1916, E 2001 (A)/753.

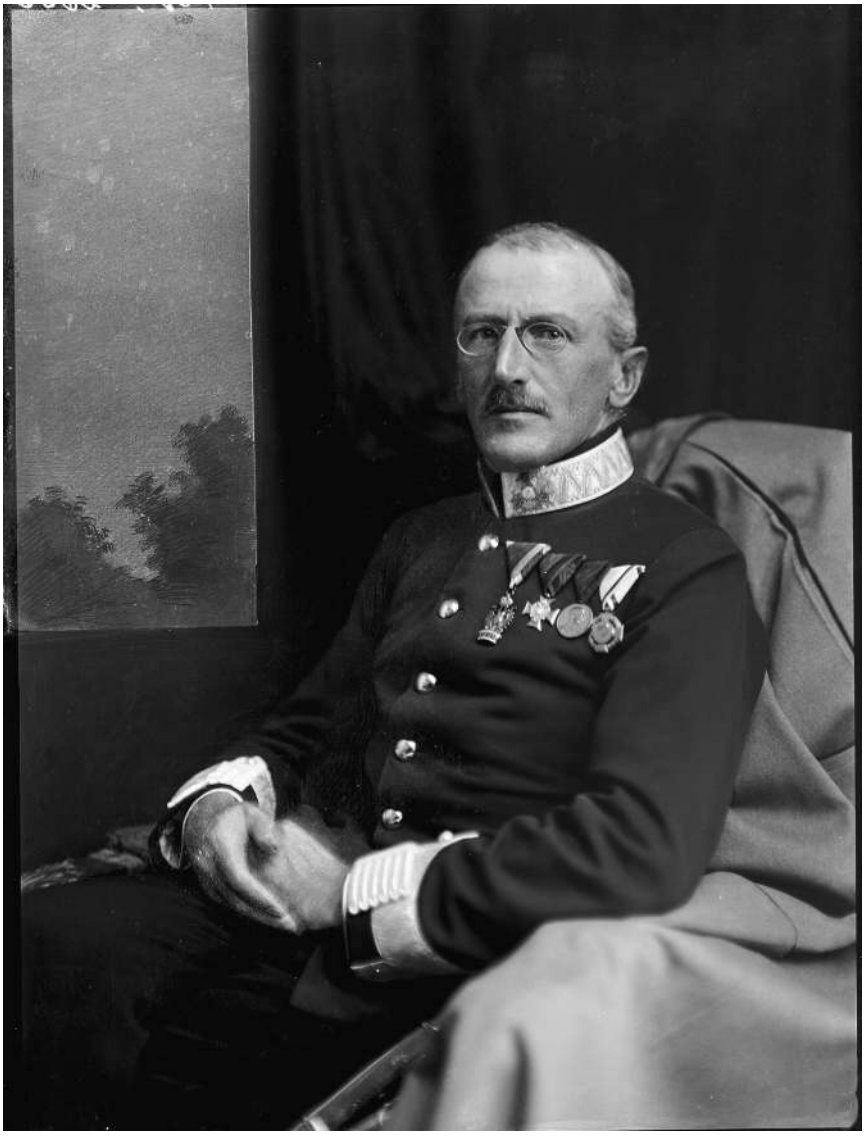

FIGURE 1. General Johannes Salis von Seewische, the first Military General-Governor of Serbia. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv (Kos 2656 D).

violence of the Habsburg war and occupation in Serbia was in many ways unprecedented at the time. This book is not intended as a whitewash of that violence, which simply needs to be forthrightly acknowledged, but as an inquiry into the nature of that violence. The Habsburg encounter with Serbia

began in the summer of 1914. The Army believed that it faced an enemy ready to employ a fundamentally immoral nationalist argument to undermine the legitimate claims of the Empire and the rules of war. The Army's response was exceedingly violent, yet the response hardly strayed from established bounds of the Army's already harsh regulations. A year and a half later, the occupation began and the Army set about to remake Serbia through an absolutely rigid military legal system as well as the systematic policing and expulsion of the Serb political class. Serbia was being prepared in the eyes of the Army for integration into an idealized bureaucratic-absolutist Empire, supranational in outlook and free of politics. This was a veritable war on national politics. But just as this war and the use of military legality stemmed from conditions inside the Empire, the desperate food situation in the Empire during the latter part of the war shifted occupied Serbia into a more favourable position. The land of "king killers," an epithet attached to Serbia because of the assassinations of Serb King Milan Obrenović in 1903 and Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914, became the "land of milk and honey."[2] The food issue and the elimination of the Serb political class caused a shift in Army attitudes. Nowhere was this better seen than in the counterguerrilla war against Serb *Komitadjis* (guerrillas) in southern Serbia. By 1918, the Army's view of the Serbs had shifted. The Army considered Serbia pacified and itself the protector of ordinary Serbs.

## VANISHING SERBIA, VANISHING EAST

The original conflict that sparked the First World War, a local contest between the Habsburg Empire and a rapidly modernizing Serbia, has disappeared from our view of the *course* of the war like a bright flash that immediately faded to black after July 1914. Although questions may still surround Germany's, Russia's, or Britain's responsibility for the war, it was clear that the Habsburg Empire refused to be dissuaded from imposing punishment on Serbia.[3] This refusal may have stemmed from encirclement, as Paul Schroeder argued; the attempt to resolve a local war, as Joachim Remak maintained; the desire to exploit a short-lived temporary military advantage, as David Hermann contended; or an alliance with Germany that became offensively minded, as Jürgen Angelow claimed.[4] The Habsburg Army

2 Friedrich Wallisch, *Die Pforte zum Orient: Unser Friedenswerk in Serbien* (Vienna, 1917), pp. 86–7.

3 See one recent assessment in Samuel R. Williamson and Ernest R. May, "An Identity of Opinion: Historians and July 1914," *Journal of Modern History* 79, no. 2 (June 2007), pp. 353–9.

4 Jürgen Angelow, *Kalkül und Prestige: Der Zweibund am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Cologne, 2000); David G. Hermann, *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* (Princeton, N.J., 1996), p. 225; Joachim Remak, "The Third Balkan War: World War I Origins Reconsidered," *Journal of Modern History* 43, no. 3 (September 1971): 355–66; Paul W. Schroeder, "World War I as Galloping Gertie: A Reply to Joachim Remak," *Journal of Modern History* 44, no. 3 (September 1972): 319–44. For a critique of Schroeder, see Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815–1918* (London, 1989), pp. 246–58.

leadership as well as Austrian Minister-President Karl Graf von Stürgkh and Foreign Minister Leopold Berchthold intended to punish Serbia in a short, successful war.[5] The war would serve as an object lesson for restive nationalities in the Empire as well as for states outside the Empire that hoped to suborn its supposedly "suppressed" nationalities. Habsburg calculations for war had a certain recklessness to them. The Army in particular appeared willfully blind to the likely Russian intervention to prevent the defeat of its Balkan client. An attitude of "just let loose" took hold of many in the Army, as Günther Kronenbitter argued.[6] Serbia would be punished, and if war between the European Great Powers came about as a result, so be it.

Once the war began, larger events swiftly overshadowed the punishment of Serbia as Germany pushed forward with its modified Schlieffen Plan, which failed with the Allied victory at the Marne. Alongside events in the west, the surprisingly rapid Russian mobilization, with the exception of Tannenberg,[7] held portents of disaster for Germany and the Habsburg Empire in August 1914. Russian pressure on the Habsburg Empire reduced events on the front against Serbia to an ineptly managed but bloody sideshow and a triumph for little Serbia.[8] It repulsed two separate Habsburg invasion attempts orchestrated by *Feldzeugmeister* (General) Oskar Potiorek, who suffered blame for the lapse of security that led to Franz Ferdinand's death in Sarajevo.[9] But by late 1915, Serbia faced an overwhelming combined German, Habsburg, and Bulgarian invasion to which it quickly succumbed. Before Serbia's defeat, the Habsburg Empire and Bulgaria squabbled over the spoils from Serbia. The Bulgarians solved this problem by aggressively moving into central Kosovo and Macedonia, blocking any further Habsburg movements to the south.[10]

In the meantime, the Serbian Army began an epic retreat to the Adriatic coast, with many Serb civilians in tow, hoping to be promptly picked up by

5 Samuel R. Williamson, *Austria-Hungary and the Origins of the First World War* (New York, 1991).
6 Günther Kronenbitter, "'Nur los lassen': Österreich-Ungarn und der Wille zum Krieg," in *Lange und kurze Wege in den Ersten Weltkrieg: Vier Augsburger Beiträge zur Kriegsursachenforschung*, eds. Johannes Burckhardt et al. (Munich, 1996).
7 See Dennis E. Showalter, *Tannenberg: Clash of Empires* (Hamden, Conn., 1991).
8 The military-operational side of the Serbian defense of the country is covered by James Lyon, "Serbia and the Balkan Front, 1914" (Diss., University of California–Los Angeles, 1995); idem, "'A Peasant Mob': The Serbian Army on the Eve of the Great War," *Journal of Military History* 61, no. 3 (1997): 481–502. On the Habsburg side, the standard work remains the series edited by the War Archives. See Edmund Glaise von Horstenau, ed., *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg, 1914–1918*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 1930). See also John R. Schindler, "Disaster on the Drina: The Austro-Hungarian Army in Serbia, 1914," *War in History* 9, no. 2 (2002): 159–95.
9 On Potiorek, see Rudolf Jeřábek, *Potiorek: General im Schatten von Sarajevo* (Graz, 1991).
10 There is extensive documentation on the Bulgarian drive into Kosovo in Conrad's *Nachlaß* at the Kriegsarchiv in Vienna. The best published summary of these events can be found in Holger Afflerbach's biography of Erich von Falkenhayn. See Holger Afflerbach, *Falkenhayn: Politisches Denken und Handeln im Kaiserreich* (Munich, 1994), pp. 341–53.

the Italian Navy, only to be left waiting for a month in desolate conditions with few food supplies.[11] By 1916, Serbia had been at war for nearly four straight years, and not only war but disease and hunger had devastated Serbia. A crippling typhus epidemic ravaged the country in 1915 and large-scale international aid arrived too late for thousands of people. As a whole, no country lost a higher percentage of its population than Serbia and over two-thirds of the losses were civilian.[12] The flight through the mountains of Montenegro and Albania followed massive defeat and crippling epidemics. Although one might look back now on such a flight across the mountains in the midst of winter as reckless in the extreme, from the perspective of those embarking on such a trek, it looked much less reckless. It was in line with a pattern of mass population movements that had become a well-established practice in the Balkans during the wars of the late nineteenth century and continued through the Balkan Wars. The dream of creating a Greater Serbia that extended from Macedonia in the south straight to the Adriatic Sea and included the Habsburg province of Bosnia-Herzegovina collapsed. The fear of Habsburg revenge and an anti-Serb, nationalizing Bulgaria helped drive the exodus.

Back in the now abandoned capital of Belgrade, however, the squalor of the defeated Serb Army mattered little because the city buzzed with the activity of the newly created *Militärgeneralgouvernement Serbien* (Military General Government of Serbia, abbreviated hereafter as MGG/S). The MGG/S ruled the northern three-quarters of Serbia from January 1, 1916, through late October 1918. Little doubt existed as to who was ultimately responsible for the MGG/S. While the military governor was appointed by the Emperor, the occupation answered to the Quartermaster Section of the *Armeeoberkommando* (Army High Command, hereafter AOK). This tied the MGG/S to an organization that, under the direction of General Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf and staffed by highly conservative and aggressive staff officers, had ambitious visions for reshaping the Empire's internal politics along bureaucratic-absolutist lines. The MGG/S divided Serbia into thirteen roughly equal *Kreise* (provinces) and broke these thirteen into another sixty-four *Bezirke* (districts). Although the MGG/S intended to keep as much power as possible in its hands, it was left with few resources to do so. The occupation had a minimum of manpower, only fifty thousand garrison soldiers, at its disposal to administer Serbia. Even of these fifty

11 On the retreat, see John Clinton Adams, *Flight in Winter* (Princeton, N.J., 1942).

12 Paul Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890–1945* (New York, 2000). For a contemporary account, see Richard Pearson Strong et al., *Typhus Fever with Particular Reference to the Serbian Epidemic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920). For overall statistics on Serbian losses in the war, see Dragolub Jovanović, *Les effets économiques et sociaux de la guerre en Serbie* (New Haven, Conn., 1930), p. 320; Marie-Janine Calic, *Sozialgeschichte Serbiens, 1815–1941: Der aufhaltsame Fortschritt während der Industrialisierung* (Munich, 1994), p. 216.

thousand, only fifteen thousand at most were considered capable of actually fighting should an uprising occur. The occupation ruled a country whose population fell dramatically from 1.8 million at the beginning of the war to 1.4 million at the end. Due to the flight of the government, starvation, and disease, Belgrade decreased in size from ninety thousand people to fifteen thousand according to some estimates.[13] The Empire that swallowed Serbia in 1916 could hardly stand on its own two feet. Defeats outweighed victories and the Empire's apparent expansion in early 1916 flimsily masked its increasing desperation. By summer, the Army suffered a defeat at the hands of the Russian Brusilov offensive, which left the Empire on the precipice of military collapse. After this offensive, only German intervention, effectively taking command of all Habsburg Army groups save one and the combined German-Bulgarian shield on the Salonika front, staved off catastrophe. Left largely on its own to defend against Italy, the Empire stumbled into one loss after another. Although many have pointed to the staying power of the Army, Holger Herwig's description of the Army's losses makes clear its precarious state.[14] At home, things were even more desperate. The Austrian half of the Empire – especially urban areas and, above all, Vienna – faced ominous food shortages. Several factors – the Allied blockade; the loss of grain production from Galicia, the main grain-producing region for the Austrian half of the Empire; inadequate arrangements to receive substitute foodstuffs from Hungary – all drove parts of the Empire to the brink of starvation.

In the midst of this situation, the argument runs, the Empire followed an occupation strategy in Serbia that neatly combined exploitation and revenge. At least, this is the general trend of Serbian historiography on the subject. The followers of this trend continue, albeit in a more subdued and sophisticated form, many of the claims present in the wartime and memoir literature of the occupation. They depict the Habsburg administration as the center of a vengeful effort to denationalize Serbia through propaganda and coercion.[15]

13 John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 107.
14 Holger Herwig, *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary, 1914–1918* (New York, 1997).
15 Because they were clearly meant to influence French and British public opinion, most of the contemporary accounts were published in French or English. The most prominent of these were by Henry Barby, M. Novaković, and R. A. Reiss. See Henry Barby, *Avec l'armée serbe, de l'ultimatum autrichien á l'invasion de la Serbie* (Paris, 1918); M. Novaković, *L'occupation austro-bulgare en Serbie* (Paris, 1918); R. A. Reiss, *How Austria-Hungary Waged War in Serbia: Personal Investigations of a Neutral* (Paris, 1915). Most of the memoir literature by Westerners centers on the extensive Western medical relief effort to combat Serbia's typhus epidemic in early 1915 and the Serbian Army retreat to the Adriatic coast. The Serbian memoir literature is extensive. The most prominent examples include Milostislav Bartulica, *Raspeće Srbije* (Zagreb, 1920); Ivo Jelavić, *Iz pregažene Srbije* (Sarajevo, 1919); Luka Lazarević, *Beleške iz okupacije Beograda (1915–1918)*, (Belgrade, 1919); Stojan Maksimović, *Uspomene iz okupacije Nemačke, Austrijske i Bulgarske 1914–1918* (Belgrade, 1919). For a memoir from one of the deportation camps, see Risto Kovijanić, *Naðmerska donia smrti* (Bratislava, 1936).

The first Serbian scholarly work on the occupation appeared under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation and was written by a Serbian scholar, Dragolub Jovanović. Jovanović concentrated on the Austrian and Bulgarian occupation regimes, and although he did not possess extensive access to archival materials, he interviewed survivors of the occupation. Jovanović described the occupation with a degree of subtlety unmatched in many later Serbian works. Jovanović, operating within a modernization framework, argued that while Serbia suffered under the occupation, in certain areas such as agriculture, the occupation provided an opportunity for Serbia to modernize.[16]

Later Serbian scholarly works, especially those appearing after 1980, focused on Habsburg repression, especially on sorting through the disparate estimates of Serbs who perished or were deported during the occupation. While some Serbian scholars such as Andrej Mitrović claim Serbian government-in-exile assertions regarding the number of people killed and deported are inflated, others, such as Vladimir Stojančević, argue that those numbers are essentially correct.[17] These works remain rooted in the belief that the occupation authorities pursued such policies in a calculated attempt to inflict as much damage as possible on the Serbian people and the Serbian nation. Mitrović, the most sophisticated historian of the subject, asserts that Habsburg economic imperialism and a search for export markets fueled Habsburg colonial ambitions in Serbia. These treatments of the occupation offer a good deal of empirical material on the subject, but look past several important issues critical to understanding the stakes involved in the occupation. Executions, atrocities against civilians, military law, and the banishment and internment of the Serb political class all point to a clear intention to destroy the Serb national consciousness or at a minimum Serb independence. Here I believe much of the Serb historiography is on the mark. But it is dangerous to follow the Serb historians and allow the occupation's results to determine our analysis of the occupation's motives. To comprehend the political questions involved in the occupation, we have to begin from a deeper understanding of the working assumptions and ideology of the Habsburg Army as the organizer of this imperial occupation. Army leaders believed that the Serbian question was a political one that centered on a deep fault line between a nationalizing state and an anational, bureaucratic-absolutist state. The counterrevolutionary and antinationalist ideology of the pre-1848 period, not just anti-Serb attitudes, permeated the Habsburg Army. It saw Serbia along with the rest of the Empire

16 Jovanović, *Les effets économiques et sociaux de la guerre en Serbie*.

17 Andrej Mitrović, *Srbija u prvom Svetskom ratu* (Belgrade, 1984); Vladimir Stojančević, "Srpski civilni internirci u Austro-Ugarskoj za vreme prvog svetskog rata," in *Srbija i Srpski narod za vreme rata i okupacije 1914–1918 godine*, ed. Vladimir Stojančević (Leskovac, 1988), pp. 76–97. See also Ljubodrag Popović, "Srpski internirci u logorima Austro-Ugarske 1916 godine," in *Naučni Skup Srbija 1916 godine*, vol. 5: *Zbornik radova*, eds. Slavenko Terzić et al. (Belgrade, 1987), pp. 309–20.

through the lens of this ideology.[18] Serb historians fail to take this into account and their treatment of the occupation lacks a broader European historiographical perspective. When they deal with the occupation, Serb historians, with the exception of Mitrović, accept its importance as self-evident, integrating it into Serb national history but not into Habsburg imperial history or the history of the First World War. Such limitations made Western historians' neglect of the occupation even easier.

In the West, the fixation on the Western front in Western historiography of the war deepened the isolation of the occupation. The explosion of scholarship on the First World War during the 1990s failed to relieve this historiographical seclusion. For militarily inclined historians, the war had been decided on the Western front and the East mattered little to the final outcome. For culturally inclined historians, the experience of the trenches and the creation of the "front community" that played a role in the rise of National Socialism could be found only in the West. Questions regarding civilian mobilization in the war or the war's role in destabilizing or reinforcing gender norms centered predominantly on Western Europe. Of course, historians made isolated interventions into the history of the war in Eastern Europe, from Norman Stone on the military side, to Lars Lih on food issues in Russia, to Klaus Theleweit's work on the Freikorps, which was predominantly active in Eastern Europe.[19] Austrian historians also wrote about the Eastern front,[20] but such interventions failed to shift the broader historiography of the war away from the West. The war in the East remained shrouded in obscurity while the Bolshevik Revolution swallowed Imperial Russia's war.

Things are changing. A younger generation of scholars, led by Russianists along with a smattering of scholars from other countries, has begun to refocus our attention on the war in the East. From Peter Holquist's work on the

18 Too many Serbian works deal with the Habsburg occupation to list them exhaustively. The most prominent of these works include Danica Milić, "Priv redni system u okupiranoj Srbiji 1916," in *Naučni Skup Srbija 1916 godine*, ed. Slavenko Terzić (Belgrade, 1987); Andrej Mitrović, *Prodor na Balkan: Srbija u planovima Austro-Ugarske i Nemač 1908–1918* (Belgrade, 1981); idem, *Ustaničke borbe u Srbiji 1916–1918* (Belgrade, 1987); Bozitsa Mladenović, "Novi narativni izvori o topličkom ustanku," *Istorijski Casopis* 42–43 (1995–6): 311–18; Olga Ostojić-Fejić, "Americka humanitarna delatnost u Srbiji tokom prvog svetskog rata," *Istorijski Casopis* 39 (1992): 199–206; Milivoj Perović, *Toplički ustanak 1917* (Belgrade, 1971); Popović, "Srpski internirci u logorima Austro-Ugarske 1916 godine"; Vladimir Stojančević, *Srbija 1908–1918: Izabrani radovi* (Belgrade, 1995).

19 See Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front, 1914–1917* (London, 1975). On food issues in Russia, see, Lars T. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914–1921* (Berkeley, 1990). On cultural and gender issues, see Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, vol. 1: *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, vol. 2: *Male Bodies: Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, trans. Stephen Conway (Minneapolis, Minn., 1987).

20 Manfried Rauchensteiner, *Der Tod des Doppeladlers: Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg* (Graz, 1993). Of earlier works, the most notable are Richard Georg Plaschka, Horst Haselsteiner, and Arnold Suppan, *Innere Front: Militärassistenz, Widerstand und Umsturz in der Donaumonarchie 1918*, vol. 1: *Zwischen Streik und Meuterei*, vol. 2. *Umsturz* (Vienna, 1974).

civil war in Ukraine to Maureen Healy's treatment of wartime Vienna, these scholars have asked us to rethink how the inclusion of Eastern Europe reshapes our view of the war.[21] Integrating the East into the general history of the war helps us recognize the war's massive levels of civilian displacement and its violence against civilians. Of course, this was not something limited to the Eastern front, as the experience of the French and Belgians under German military attack and occupation has shown. But including the experience of civilians in war in the East forces us to reorient our view of centrality of trench warfare to the war. The inclusion of the Eastern front in our broader historiography of the war could transform trench warfare from a hallmark of the war experience into an anomaly. John Keegan's claim that the First World War "imposed on the civilian populations involved almost none of the deliberate disruption and atrocity that was to be a feature of the Second" simply cannot stand alongside any sustained scrutiny of the war in the East.[22] We should look to the work of Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, who have asked us to place violence against civilians in the center of our analysis of the war, not to see it as an accidental and unforeseen byproduct of the war.[23] Examining the occupation of Serbia will help continue this reorientation of World War I when it comes to understanding how the war ensnared civilians in webs of violence, atrocity, and displacement.

By 1918, the Habsburg Empire had come to occupy nearly 400,000 square kilometers of territory containing 20 million people.[24] Historians

21 Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (New York, 2004); Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia's Continuum of Crisis, 1914–1921* (Cambridge, Mass., 2002). The other recent works on the East are Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington, Ind., 1999); Vejas Gabriel Liulevecius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge, 2000); Eric Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire: The Campaign against Enemy Aliens during World War I* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003); Alexander Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914–1920* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 2005); Abba Strazhas, *Deutsche Ostpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg: Der Fall Ober Ost 1915–1917* (Wiesbaden, 1993). For articles and chapters in books, see Andreas R. Hofmann, "Reweaving the Urban Fabric: Multiethnicity and Occupation in Łódź, 1914–1918," in *Endangered Cities: Military Power and Urban Societies in the Era of the World Wars*, eds. Marcus Funck and Roger Chickering (Boston, Mass., 2004), pp. 81–94; Eduard Mühle, "Weltkriegserlebnis an der galizisch-polnischen Ostfront 1914/15: Zur Wahrnehmung des Ostens in Feldpostbriefen des Ostforschers Hermann Aubin," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 51, no. 4 (2002): 529–75; Robert L. Nelson, "'Unsere Frage ist der Osten': Representations of the Occupied East in German Soldier Newspapers, 1914–1918," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 51, no. 4 (2002): 500–28; Joshua Sanborn, "Unsettling the Empire: Violent Migrations and Social Disaster in Russia during World War I," *Journal of Modern History* 77, no. 2 (June 2005): 290–324.

22 John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York, 1999), p. 8.

23 Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: Understanding the Great War*, trans. Catherine Temerson (New York, 2002), pp. 45–69.

24 Oskar Regele, *Gericht über Habsburgs Wehrmacht: Letzte Siege und Untergang unter dem Armee-Oberkommando Kaiser Karls I. Generaloberst Arz von Straussenburg* (Vienna, 1968), p. 132.

have only recently rediscovered the phenomenon of occupation in the war. It needs to be integrated into the general history of the war. When one considers that not only Belgium and northern France in the West but also Galicia, Serbia, Montenegro, northern Italy, Albania, Romania, Congress Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltic states all fell under occupation regimes of various size and spans of time, it is clear that occupation was not an isolated phenomenon. The focus on occupation also allows us to reintegrate the First World War into broader trends of twentieth-century warfare in which occupation plays a key role. Placing occupation at the center of the First World War also makes possible comparisons with colonial wars of the nineteenth century as well as the future wars of the twentieth century, in particular the Second World War and the wars of decolonization. Was occupation in World War I part of a continuum of occupation experiences that reached outside of Europe and into the colonial experience, radicalizing further during the war, and forming a bridge to occupation during World War II? Or does this current focus on pre–World War I extra-European colonization and the links with the First and Second World Wars simply miss the uniquely European practices of occupation? These are questions that can be answered only through more deeply researching occupation practices during the First World War.

## THE WAR AT HOME, THE WAR ABROAD

The Habsburg occupation of Serbia plays an important role in the reintegration of the conflict in the East into the First World War, promising answers to the questions just posed, the nature of the Habsburg Empire during the war, and helping reemphasize the extreme nature of the conflict between empire and nation in the war. The violence of the occupation was not linked to a playing out of "ethnic hatreds," as so many journalistic analyses of war in twentieth-century Eastern Europe assert.[25] On the contrary, the occupation shows how the Army's war in Serbia was inextricably intertwined with its attitudes and projects vis-à-vis the entire Empire. Army methods of rule were embedded in an antidemocratic, bureaucratic-absolutist tradition that the Army never escaped. This was not a flight forward into a self-consciously innovative occupation shorn from the moorings of the past. The Habsburg Empire, unlike Germany, remained hesitant about a fundamental reordering

25 The classic example of this genre is Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey through Yugoslavia* (New York, 1941). Robert Kaplan offers a recent similar example; see Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York, 1993). For a compelling alternative argument on the breakup of Yugoslavia that does not emphasize the "ancient hatreds" arguments, see Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C., 1995). A less convincing case, but still an alternative to the "ancient hatreds" argument, is V. P. Gagnon, *The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990's* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2004).