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Thinking About the Afterlife of the Habsburg Monarchy in Central Europe

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In many ways the legacy of the Habsburg Monarchy to the successor states was obvious, but the question of what institutions, traditions, and values persisted after 1918 deserves careful thinking. One must try to distinguish between what derived simply from the shared experience of life in the Central European space and what actually came from the offices, agencies, values, and modes of everyday life which were connected to the Habsburg state. There was little nostalgia for the old empire in the first decades after 1918, and most of the new states proudly presented themselves as new national polities committed to popular democratic rule and initiated far-reaching change. Nonetheless, much of the administration, laws, leaders, parties, interest groups, political behavior, and everyday customs from the old realm persisted for many years in all the successor states for good and for ill.