Communism’s Shadow:
Post-Communist Legacies, Values and Behavior

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Abstract: Twenty years after the collapse of communism, a rough consensus in the literature on post-communist politics is that the past matters; many questions remain, however, about exactly how, when, and why the past matters, especially in terms of political values and behavior. To address this gap in the literature, we present a systematic framework for considering the effect of communist era legacies on post-communist political values and behavior, including a set of mechanism by which these effects can be transmitted and a set of particular values and behaviors in regard to which we expect legacy effects may be particularly important. We also address methodological questions associated with testing the effects of legacies and provide an example of how the framework can be applied by examining the issue of trust in political parties.