

CHAPTER 1



Communism's Shadow

1.1. INTRODUCTION

More than a quarter century after the Leninist extinction in the former Soviet bloc, the specter—or at least the memory—of communism still haunts the region. Memories of Stalinism (both glowing and bitter) feature prominently in the political discourse of Russia and Ukraine, while new national-populist regimes in Poland and Hungary justify their political tactics at least in part in terms of the fight against communism, even as their opponents accuse them of having adopted much of the communists' mindset and tactics. Even if much of this language is intended simply as a rhetorical flourish, it suggests a deeper truth about the politics of the region: communism's shadow is still ever present in the hearts and minds of post-communist citizens.

Indeed, when analyzing a wide range of public opinion data from the first two decades after the collapse of communism, we find that post-communist citizens are, on average, less supportive of democracy, less supportive of markets, and more supportive of state-provided social welfare—but no more of supportive of gender equality—than citizens elsewhere in the world. (See Figure 1.1 on the following page.) Why?

The most intuitive answer to this question is that it is somehow a legacy of communism. But as popular as it has become to attribute outcomes of interest in post-communist countries to “legacies,”¹ and despite some recent theoretical efforts to conceptualize historical legacies more carefully (Beissinger and Kotkin 2014: 11–20; Wittenberg 2015), there is no clearly established theoretical or empirical blueprint for analyzing the effect of legacies on attitudes. Accordingly, we begin with two more theoretically precise potential answers to the question of “why”: it may be because of the experience of *living through communism*; or it may be because of the experience of *living in a post-communist country*. While related—we do not expect to find truly large proportions of a population who *lived*

¹The phrase “communist legacies” returns almost 1,700 citations on Google Scholar (accessed October 28, 2016).

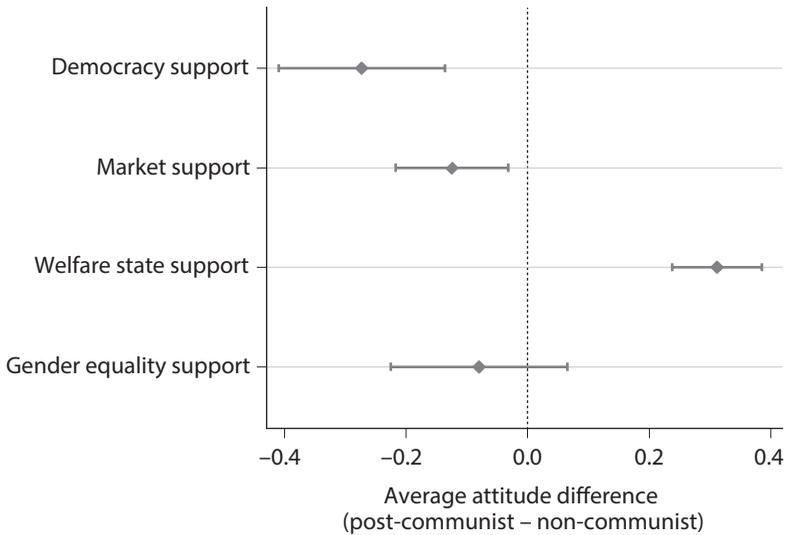


Figure 1.1. Post-communist Attitudinal Differences

This figure shows the difference in standard deviations (along with 95% confidence intervals) between the average attitudes of post-communist and non-communist respondents from the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th waves of the World Values Survey. The figure reveals that residents of post-communist countries have on average significantly lower support for democracy and markets and higher support for welfare states than their non-communist counterparts. Post-communist citizens are also somewhat less supportive of gender equality, but the difference is not statistically significant. For comparability, all dependent variables are standardized to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The estimates are based on models that include only the post-communist citizen indicator and a series of dummies for the year of the survey. For more details about the survey questions used to construct the dependent variables, see Chapter 3. For full regression results, see the electronic appendix.

through communism anywhere else than in post-communist world,² and (at least originally) most people *living in post-communist countries* had lived through some period of communist rule—they are not the same thing, and this is increasingly true as time passes and more people *live in post-communist countries* who did not *live through communism*. In addition, even people *living in post-communist countries* will have spent different numbers of years *living through* communist rule. Crucially, the two approaches have different implications for how we understand these attitudinal differences, how long we might expect them to persist, and the role

²Certain neighborhoods in London and Chicago notwithstanding.

that communist legacies play in structuring opinion on fundamental social, political, and economic issues. Furthermore, the answer to this question remains as relevant as ever, because it informs some of the most pressing issues in international politics, such as the future of the European Union project, the status of frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space, and Russia's relationship with the rest of Europe.

To the extent that differences in attitudes held by post-communist citizens are a function of people *living through* communist rule, then this would undoubtedly be a legacy of communism. Why might we expect *living through communism* to have an effect on attitudes toward democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality? For one, there is a long-standing literature on "political socialization" that argues that all political regimes—to one extent or another—seek to inculcate attitudes supportive of the regime into their citizens (Dennis 1968; Greenstein 1971; Greenberg 1973). In many cases, these efforts may be lackadaisical or passive, but Soviet communism clearly made an active attempt to create a new "Socialist Man" complete with a requisite set of beliefs about politics, economics, and social relations (Deutscher 1967). Thus, *living through* communist rule should be a promising candidate for explaining communist legacy effects on public opinion.

Indeed, communist regimes differed from most other flavors of authoritarian regimes by being not merely interested in ruling over citizens, but also trying to implement a particular project of shaping citizens' attitudes. Communist citizens were not simply expected to accept the rule of the communists, but rather additionally to embrace and embody the precepts of socialism.³ Moreover, this was not just a stated goal: communist regimes took active steps to try to make sure these precepts were adopted, including in the schools, the workplace, and party meetings. As Ilie Moromete remarks in the Romanian novel *Moromeții* by Marin Preda, "these guys [the communists] are not content with just taking your cattle from the stable, they also make you sign that you gave it willingly" (Preda 1967: 261). Thus the idea that people who *lived through* communist rule would come to adopt attitudes in line with those the regime wanted its citizens to hold should not be that much of a stretch.

Of course, it is also possible that the experience of *living through* communism did nothing to affect the way that individuals thought about politics, economics, and basic social relationships in the post-communist era. Perhaps the experience of living under communist rule was simply relegated to the past once post-communism began, a relic of bygone times eclipsed by subsequent experiences. In that case we need a different explanation

³Of course, this desire was stronger under certain types of communist regimes than others, a point to which we return in much greater detail shortly.

for why post-communist citizens hold different attitudes on such fundamental political and economic questions than citizens elsewhere. If *living through* communism does not hold the answer, then the next most likely candidate would seem to be the fact that post-communist citizens are *living in* post-communist countries. After all, there are all sorts of appreciable ways in which post-communist countries differ from other countries. Importantly, some of these ways will themselves be legacies of communism, but some will not.

How might we characterize these differences? To begin with, countries “assigned” to experience communism—to use the parlance of experimental research design—were not assigned randomly. Soviet communism took root—or was imposed—in particular geographic areas with particular social and political histories. If these geographic characteristics or historical patterns of sociopolitical development were driving contemporary attitudes, then the observed differences in post-communist attitudes would not in any way be a legacy of communism. For example, if attitudes toward markets were simply a function of the geographic location of a country (e.g., suppose that the colder the climate, the more likely citizens were to oppose markets), then differences in attitudes between post-communist citizens and citizens from other countries would simply be due to the fact that post-communist citizens are *living in* countries that have characteristics—predating the communist experience—that are associated with opposition to markets. The actual experience of having been ruled by communists would be irrelevant; the divergence could be explained simply by the fact that communists came to power in countries with features that—today—are associated with a greater antipathy to markets.

Of course, the contours of post-communist societies were not exclusively shaped by factors that predate communist rule: both communist-era and post-communist developments affect the nature of the countries that post-communist citizens are *living in* now. At the time of any survey of post-communist citizens’ attitudes, post-communist citizens will be *living in* countries with particular political institutions, economic conditions, and sociodemographic characteristics: all these factors could explain divergence in attitudes from citizens living in other countries. After all, there are already many theoretical arguments to explain why democracy and markets are more popular among some people than others.⁴ Maybe overeducated and underemployed people everywhere are more likely to oppose market economies. Or it may be the case that democracy is less popular

⁴On democracy, for example, see Chu et al. 2008; Duch 1993; Evans and Whitefield 1995; Gibson et al. 1992; Gibson 1995; Kitschelt 1992; Mishler and Rose 1996; Rose and Mishler 1996; on markets, see Przeworski 1991; Gibson 1996; Stokes 1996; Earle and Gehlbach 2003; Hayo 2004; Graham and Sukhtankar 2004; and Gabel 2009.

in countries with young, dysfunctional political institutions. And perhaps citizens in countries with poorly performing economies are more likely to turn against both democracy and capitalism. If post-communist countries have a disproportionately high number of overeducated and underemployed citizens, are governed by new and not particularly well-functioning political institutions, and experience greater economic turmoil, then all these characteristics of the society they are currently *living in* could explain why post-communist citizens hold systematically different attitudes toward politics and economics than citizens elsewhere. More generally, we can classify the relevant characteristics of the countries that post-communist citizens are *living in* at the time of the survey as falling into one of three broad categories: the *sociodemographic makeup* of society; *economic conditions*; and *political institutions and outcomes*. Any of these factors could explain why we observe—on average—post-communist citizens holding different attitudes about politics, economics, and social relations than citizens in other parts of the world.

This leads to an important and complicated question: to the extent that factors related to the countries that post-communist citizens are *living in* at the time of the survey could explain divergence in attitudes, would this then represent evidence that *communist legacies* are having an effect on post-communist attitude formation? Technically speaking, any characteristic of society in the post-communist era is a function of varying combinations of *communist-era* and *post-communist-era* developments; everything is therefore both a legacy of communism and a result of post-communism. However, some of these factors—for example, the sociodemographic makeup of society—are clearly more of a communist-era legacy than a feature of post-communist developments, while others—for example, electoral rules—are the opposite; still others—for example, unemployment levels in the 1990s—are probably a function of both communist legacies and post-communist policies. Thus, if our primary explanation for post-communist attitudinal divergence were to come from these contemporaneous indicators of the country post-communist citizens are *living in*, we would have to look very carefully at each relevant factor to assess the extent to which it could be credibly considered a communist legacy.⁵

If, however, we want to capture features of the countries that post-communist citizens are *living in* that are totally independent of post-communist influences, then we need to measure conditions as they were in these countries (and in the countries to which we are comparing them) on the eve of communism's collapse. If, for example, we think that the reason post-communist citizens are supportive of state-provided social welfare

⁵As will be discussed very shortly, this does not turn out to be a concern in this book in practice.

is because *communism* resulted in abnormally large spending on social welfare, then we would want to look at the relationship between state spending before communism collapsed and contemporary attitudes. To the extent that attitude divergence among post-communist citizens could be explained by the fact that they are *living in* a country where there was high spending on social welfare in 1989, this would be a strong candidate to be a legacy effect of communism.⁶

To end the suspense quickly, the primary empirical contribution of this book is to show that there is much stronger support for the claim that the attitudes of post-communist citizens toward democracy, markets, and state-provided social welfare are due to *living through* communism than *living in* post-communist countries, and thus these attitudes should be considered at least in part a legacy of communism.⁷ This is not to say that conditions on the ground in post-communist countries are never useful for understanding the attitudes of post-communist citizens, but at least in these three issue areas, the incremental leverage from these factors is dwarfed by the effect of *living through* communism.

The empirical evidence to support this claim is motivated by a simple assumption: people who *live through* “more communism” (i.e., live more years of their life under communist rule) should exhibit “more” of (i.e., higher congruence with) the attitudes consistent with communist ideology.⁸ This basic idea forms the core of our *living through communism* analysis in this book: an additional year of exposure should be correlated with additional support for the pro-regime attitude (i.e., less support for democracy and markets, and more support for state-provided social welfare and gender equality). However, it is crucial that we estimate the effect of years of exposure to communism independent of the age of respondent at the time she or he is queried about her or his opinions. Clearly, people

⁶The reason we cannot claim that this would definitively be a legacy of communism is that state spending on social welfare in 1989 could itself be a legacy of pre-communist conditions. However, as we will explain in detail in Chapter 3, when we actually test the effect of these “end of communism” variables, we will include pre-communist indicators in our models as control variables. If we could control for every aspect of pre-communism in our analysis, then our end-of-communism variables could be said to be exclusively picking up communist legacies. This is of course impossible in practice, but we do our best to control for as many pre-communist indicators as possible. In addition, as we detail later in this chapter, examining the differential effect of different sets of end-of-communism variables has the added advantage of allowing us to unpack which particular aspects of the communist project were potentially most responsible for the attitudes in question.

⁷Attitudes toward gender equality reveal a much more complex—but no less interesting—story for reasons that we will explain a bit later in this chapter and then in much more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

⁸Here, less support for democracy, less support for markets, more support for social welfare spending, and more support for gender equality.

with many years of exposure to communism will typically be older than those with few years of exposure to communism, and thus it is necessary to ensure that assessments of the effect of exposure on attitudes are made while controlling for the age of the respondent.⁹ This is one of the major advantages of employing large comparative cross-national survey data—crucially including multiple surveys from the same country—in our analyses: such a research design makes it possible to estimate an effect for exposure to communism while controlling for age.¹⁰

That being said, all exposure is of course not equal, so we also test a series of hypotheses based on the idea that the *intensity of exposure* might vary. Moreover, different people in different contexts might react to this exposure in different ways, so we similarly test a number of hypotheses related to variation in *resistance to exposure*.¹¹ We allow both *intensity* and *resistance* to be a function of both country-level factors¹² and individual-level factors.¹³

The empirical tests of our *intensity* and *resistance* hypotheses produce nuanced results.¹⁴ On the one hand, for all four attitudes in question, there

⁹We thank Anja Neundorf and Dick Niemi for driving home the importance of this approach at a crucial time in the development of the project.

¹⁰Our identification strategy for estimating the effect of exposure while controlling for age is laid out in more detail in Section 3.3.3 of Chapter 3 but essentially relies on the fact that with multiple surveys from a given country, we will have examples of respondents with the same years of exposure and different ages, as well as the same age and different years of exposure, across different surveys. Moreover, the total number of years of exposure to communist rule is capped at a level fixed by history (and constant within countries), while age is not theoretically capped at any particular level and certainly varies across individuals even within countries. We can also gain leverage from the fact that communist rule started and ended in slightly different years in different countries even above and beyond the dramatic difference in start dates across East-Central Europe and the non-Baltic former Soviet republics. Note that doing so with a single cross-sectional survey in a single country where everyone had lived their entire life under communist rule would make such a task impossible, as age and exposure would perfectly co-vary if the period of communist rule was long enough.

¹¹As explained in great detail in Chapter 3, we test both sets of hypotheses by interacting exposure to communism with the relevant *intensity/resistance* variable.

¹²E.g., in a communist context, was the individual living under a Stalinist regime (*greater intensity*)? Does the individual live in a country with a prior history of democratic rule (*greater resistance*)?

¹³E.g., in a communist context, was the individual educated under communism (*greater intensity*)? Is the individual Catholic (*greater resistance*)?

¹⁴The theoretical concept of *living through* rule by a particular regime—along with the idea that there can be variation in the *intensity of* and *resistance to* exposure to the regime and its precepts—is intended to be general enough to be applied to the study of the effects of any type of regime that attempts to inculcate a particular view of politics among its citizens. However, for the purpose of this book we introduce a specific set of hypotheses—presented in Chapter 2—to predict both micro- and macro-level factors that affected the *intensity* and *resistance* to Soviet communist regimes specifically (see Table 2.2 in Chapter 2).

are always at least some *intensity* and *resistance* hypotheses for which we find strong empirical support. To put this another way, we always learn more about the drivers of political attitudes by engaging in the exercise of testing our *intensity* and *resistance* hypotheses than if we had stopped simply at testing the average effects of a year of exposure to communist rule. Moreover, in the one opinion area where our generic exposure variable does not seem to work the way in which our *living through communism* model would predict—gender equality—we find a great deal of empirical support for many of our *intensity* and *resistance* hypotheses. In other words, without the intensity and resistance hypotheses, we would have wrongly dismissed communist exposure as irrelevant to gender equality attitudes.

On the other hand, there is no single particular class of *intensity* or *resistance* hypotheses (e.g., country-level resistance hypotheses) for which we find consistent support across all our hypotheses, nor even a single hypothesis for which there is consistent support across all four opinion areas. This finding, in turn, demonstrates the importance of a rather wide-ranging approach to thinking about these *intensifying* and *resistance* hypotheses. It is not possible, therefore, to simply say “measure exposure and take account of this one particular variable and you will have the whole story.” Nevertheless, the effort required to examine a varied set of *intensifying* and *resistance* hypotheses does seem worthwhile, precisely because it provides a richer account how communist exposure affected the attitudes we study in Chapters 4–7. Moreover, we do find a few factors—in particular Catholicism, urban residence, and pre-communist regime type—that have the effect predicted across three of the four issues we examine, although of course this could be a function of the particular issues examined in this book.¹⁵ Perhaps the most striking finding, though, is the fact that even though we examine many different *intensifying and resistance* factors, it is extremely rare that we are able to find subgroups of respondents that are completely unaffected by exposure. Thus we can also

¹⁵We do, however, recognize that our testing of a wide range of *intensifying* and *resistance* hypotheses means that we are devoting a nontrivial amount of space in the book to demonstrate a large number of null results. However, it is now increasingly being recognized that political science has a publication bias in favor of positive results (Franco, Malhotra, and Simonovits 2014; Mullinix et al. 2015; see as well <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/09/does-social-science-have-a-replication-crisis/>). Given that we had theoretical reasons to expect to find support for these *intensity/resistance* hypotheses, we felt it was important to include the (many) null findings we encountered along with the positive ones that get more discussion in the text. It is still important, however, to be aware that operationalizing many of these hypotheses was challenging and, ultimately, sometimes resulted in less than optimal measures. So most of these null findings are probably safer interpreted as failing to provide evidence in support of the relevant hypotheses as opposed to definitively proving the null hypothesis.

conceive of these analyses as robustness checks to make sure that our findings of exposure effects are not driven solely by particular subsets of our respondents.

In addition, our goal is not so much to establish whether the past matters or not, but rather to show *the way* in which factors that are related to the experience of communist rule in these countries can account for attitudes held in the post-communist era and the extent to which this can be predicted by theory. With this in mind, the primary analysis in each of our four main empirical chapters (Chapters 4–7) provides the empirical tests of whether *living through communism* or *living in a post-communist country* best accounts for post-communist attitudinal divergences. We also examine the *mechanisms* by which *living through communism* accounts for attitude formation through our analysis of *intensifying* and *resistance* hypotheses as the final part of our primary analysis. In addition, we supplement these primary analyses with additional, chapter-specific research drawing on other sources of data in an attempt to delve deeper into additional mechanisms by which these effects are transmitted, but which we cannot observe using our primary data source.

In the remainder of this chapter, we proceed as follows. In the next two sections, we develop more thoroughly the theoretical arguments underlying our *living through communism* (Section 1.2) and our *living in post-communist countries* (Section 1.3) approaches to studying regime legacy effects on public opinion. In Section 1.4, we discuss the implications of our choice of attitudes toward democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality to form the substantive basis of this book, noting the dimensions on which these issues do—and do not—vary in theoretically interesting ways. We then turn in Section 1.5 to providing a basic overview of the empirical strategy employed in the book (which is addressed in much more detail in Chapter 3). In Section 1.6 we lay out a brief summary of the most important substantive findings of the book, which leads to a more general discussion in Section 1.7 of the book's contributions to the literature. We conclude by outlining the remainder of the book in Section 1.8.

1.2. LIVING THROUGH COMMUNISM

Intuitively, the idea that *living through communism* might have an effect on one's attitudes toward politics, economics, and social relationships seems fairly obvious and indeed permeates much of the literature on post-communist politics. As we will discuss throughout this book, actually demonstrating that this is the case in a rigorous, falsifiable empirical framework is quite challenging. There is also surprisingly little theoretical work on *how* living through one type of authoritarian regime might affect attitudes

following the collapse of that regime.¹⁶ Fortunately, there is an extant literature in the study of political behavior in established democracies on the topic of “political socialization” that provides a nice base on which to build such a *living through* approach to the study of regime legacies on attitudes. In the remainder of this section, we build on the brief introduction provided in the previous section to flesh out in a bit more detail the general contours of such a *living through* model, including beginning with a brief review of the political socialization literature. For now, though, we limit ourselves to general arguments underlying our *living through* approach; in Chapter 2 we go into much more detail regarding the specific hypotheses we test regarding the effects of *living through communism*.

Like many other aspects of the study of political behavior, the vast majority of the work on political socialization has been conducted in American politics, and this is especially true for the earliest work on the topic (Campbell et al. 1960; see Sapiro 2004 for a review, although see Mishler and Rose 2007). The term has been attached to a rather wide range of topics (Dennis 1968), but the most prominent have been in regard to the ways in which citizens pick up society’s “prevailing norms,”¹⁷ the ways in which children learn about politics,¹⁸ and the manner in which parental partisanship is transmitted from parents to their children.¹⁹ Although the last of these topics has come to predominate more recent work in the field in American politics, it is the first of these that is of most use to us in our current endeavor.

More specifically, there are four valuable observations from the existing literature on political socialization that we can use in attempting to craft a general model of how citizens are likely to internalize attitudes that are actively promulgated by a regime:

- (1) There is clear evidence that individuals “acquire attitudes, beliefs, and values relating to the political system of which he is a member and to his own role as citizen within that political system” (Greenberg 1973: 3).
- (2) This process can occur via multiple agents, some of the most important of which are schools (Dennis 1968; Jennings and Niemi 1968; McDevitt and Chaffee 2002; Campbell 2006).

¹⁶Although see our own earlier attempts to grapple with this question: Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2011, 2012, 2014.

¹⁷The term is from Greenstein 1971, but for a similar idea, see Greenberg 1973; Sears 1993; and Sears and Valentino 1997.

¹⁸Greenstein 1971; Sapiro 2004; and Prior 2010.

¹⁹Jennings and Niemi 1968; Zuckerman et al. 2007; and Jennings et al. 2009, although see McDevitt and Chaffee 2002, who turn the causal arrows around, arguing that we should be investigating whether parents pick up attitudes from their children, which they study by examining the effect of children’s civic education programs at school on the political behavior of their parents.

- (3) Socialization clearly varies across subsections of the population (Dennis 1968; Greenstein 1971; Visser and Krosnick 1998; Zuckerman et al. 2007; Eckstein et al. 2013).
- (4) There remains an ongoing debate about whether these socialization processes happen primarily during childhood (the “impressionable years” hypothesis) or throughout one’s life (the “lifelong openness” or “constant updating” hypothesis), but there is general agreement that the early years of one’s life are important (Krosnick and Alwin 1989; Visser and Krosnick 1998; Sears and Valentino 1997; Prior 2010; D. Osborne et al. 2011).

In moving away from the American to the post-communist context, we are struck by the wide number of factors that have been proposed to us as we developed this research agenda as possible candidates to either strengthen or weaken the effect that a given year of living under communist rule might have on the political socialization of an individual. Even in the American context there are a number of these types of factors that have been considered, but from our reading of the literature it seems that most work really focuses only on one or at most two of these factors at a time (e.g., childhood vs. adult exposure, prevalence of political discussion in one’s home), and thus the literature has not really had to develop a theoretical framework for thinking systematically about this type of variation. In the post-communist context, however, we not only have communist regimes in different countries; we also have different varieties of communism (e.g., Stalinism vs. reform communism) both within and across countries; individuals who were educated before, during, and after communism; and a wide range of religious traditions that had different relations with the officially atheistic communist state, to identify just a few potential sources of variation.

To avoid either (a) ignoring these many important sources of variation or (b) simply incorporating them into our analysis in a haphazard manner, we turn to the somewhat unlikely analogy of the causes of sunburn to motivate the *living through communism* model.²⁰ Surely, no one is going to develop sunburn without being exposed to the sun, and, correspondingly, we would expect the likelihood of doing so to increase as one spends more time in the sun. However, each additional hour of exposure to the sun is likely to have a larger effect on one’s likelihood of developing sunburn if the exposure in question is to a blazing hot sun on a cloudless summer day than if it occurs on a hazy day during the fall late in the afternoon.²¹ Similarly, we would expect for any given intensity of sunlight,

²⁰We set aside the normative implications of conceiving of living through communism as being analogous to suffering from sunburn.

²¹We might also expect sunburn to be more severe over time as the levels of ozone in the atmosphere are depleted (Abarca et al. 2002).

each additional hour of exposure to have a greater effect on the likelihood of developing sunburn for an individual covered in tanning oil than an individual covered in sunscreen.²² Thus we have a primary factor that predicts the likelihood of any given individual developing sunburn, *temporal exposure* to the stimuli (e.g., hours out in the sun), as well as two factors that can moderate the effect of that primary factor: the *intensity* or *strength* of that exposure (e.g., how strong the sunlight is); and *resistance* to that exposure (e.g., how much sunscreen a person is wearing).

The idea behind our *living through communism* model is simply to transfer this framework to exposure to the “message” of any given regime—like a Soviet communist regime—that is interested in actively transmitting a set of attitudes to its citizens. So instead of hours of sunlight, the *temporal exposure* is the time spent living under the rule of that regime.²³ Our simplest hypotheses will therefore be that each additional year of exposure to communist rule will increase the likelihood of the individual coming to hold the attitude that the regime wants to promote among its citizens, that is, that the “socialization” of the population by the regime will be successful.

However, much like exposure to sunlight, we are well aware that the *intensity* of any given individual’s exposure to the regime’s socialization efforts will vary. Crucially, our *living through* model allows for the fact that factors that *intensify exposure*—we will also use the term *strengthen exposure* interchangeably—can vary at both the country level and at the individual level. So some factors will intensify exposure for everyone living in a given country at a given time, whereas other factors will affect the intensity of exposure at the individual level.²⁴ In Chapter 2 we will provide specific hypotheses as to the types of factors that are germane for communist regimes, but for now consider just two examples to illustrate these different categories. At the *country level*, we might expect a state dominated by true believers in a regime’s ideological vision (e.g., Stalinist communist regimes) to deliver a stronger dose of regime propaganda to its citizens than a state dominated by technocrats and careerists (e.g., post-totalitarian communist regimes [Linz and Stepan 1996]).²⁵ At the *individual level*, we might expect people who attended secondary school under communism to

²²Or, interestingly enough, an individual drinking red wine regularly; see Matito et al. 2011; and http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504763_162-20086913-10391704.html.

²³For ease in interpretation and measurement, we will operationalize this concept as the number of years spent living under a communist regime, although one could of course use alternative measures of time.

²⁴To be clear, this is what we mean by a “country-level” factor: something that affects equally everyone living in a given country at a given time. Technically, we probably should call this a “country-year” level factor (although quite a few of these country-level variables are invariant to time), but for simplicity’s sake we will simply call it a country-level factor.

²⁵This is not meant to question the strength of conviction of reformers in the potential of reform communism, but rather only to order communist regime types from more “extreme”

have gotten a stronger version of the regime's message than people who either attended secondary school before or after communist rule, or who dropped out of school before completing their secondary education. So in these cases, we would expect each year of *temporal exposure* to the regime to have a *larger* effect on developing the pro-regime attitude. To put this in the language of statistics, these are variables that we would expect to have a positive interaction with exposure in terms of holding the regime-endorsed attitude.

At the same time, there are other factors that we might expect—much like sunscreen—could increase an individual's *resistance* to regime socialization, regardless of the *intensity* of the exposure. So for example, at the *country level* Darden and Grzymała-Busse (2006) have argued that people who lived in countries where literacy was higher in the pre-communist era were more likely to have been raised on stories of national myths, and thus more likely to be able to resist communist indoctrination because of recourse to these nationalist stories. At the *individual level*, we might expect Catholics—who had access to a community and a set of organizations that were often hostile to communist regimes—to have had an additional buffer between themselves and the state, and therefore additional exposure to the regime's message would have correspondingly less influence on Catholics (Grzymała-Busse 2015; Wittenberg 2006). Alternatively, it could be the case that Catholicism increases individual-level resistance through a social identity mechanism, i.e., Catholics see “people like me” as skeptical of communism.²⁶ To reiterate, the point of this argument is not that people from more literate pre-communist countries or Catholics were necessarily going to be more opposed to the ideals underlying the Soviet communist project (although that would not be inconsistent with the model), but only that a given additional year of exposure to communism might have less of an effect on these people than on others, that is, that their *resistance* would be higher.

To be clear, these are only a few examples of the types of individual-level and country-level factors that we expect could affect the *intensity* of the regime message received by citizens and their likely *resistance* to that message. Most hypotheses within this framework of course need to be developed taking account of the peculiar features of actual regimes. Therefore, we devote a large part of Chapter 2 to fleshing out a *living through*

models to more moderate versions in their adherence to communist ideological principles (such as repudiating markets).

²⁶For more on these types of “people like me” arguments related in particular to partisanship, see Green et al. 2002; and Achen and Bartels 2016. It is interesting to think about how social identities could be related to our concept of *resistance hypotheses*, which are largely about how individuals react to regime messages, but less so to our *intensity hypotheses*, which are more related to the strength of the message sent by the regime.

communism model that specifically identifies factors that we expect to enhance the effect of exposure to *communism* and increase resistance to *communist* socialization attempts; for a concise summary of these hypotheses, see in particular Section 2.3 and Table 2.2.

However, there are two individual-level variables that have received a great deal of attention in the literature and that are not necessarily context dependent. The first is age of exposure. There is a school of thought that suggests children are much more likely to be susceptible to political socialization than adults, although others have suggested that this is a life-long process (Krosnick and Alwin 1989; Visser and Krosnick 1998; Sears and Valentino 1997; Mishler and Rose 2007; D. Osborne et al. 2011).²⁷ If we accept the premise that adults are more resistant to communist socialization, then we should expect to find that only living one's early formative years under communist rule would be related to the adoption of the attitudes associated with the communist paradigm (or at least that subsequent socialization effects would be much weaker). If the lifelong socialization model holds, we should see similar effects for years spent living under a communist regime throughout one's life. Of course, it is also possible that communist socialization—unlike the more commonly studied forms of political socialization in democratic regimes—has an effect on adults but not on children. This would fly in the face of a lot of what is assumed about the effect of communist schooling (Rosen 1964), but might be consistent with a view of the world where it is only as an adult that the incentives of adopting the groupthink pushed by an authoritarian (or especially a totalitarian) regime become apparent.²⁸

Closely related is the topic of parental socialization, or the idea that children will take on the political opinions of their parents (Jennings and Niemi 1968; Beck and Jennings 1991; Achen 2002). However, it is important to note that parental socialization effects could cut in both directions depending on the attitudes of the parents toward the regime. Thus children of parents who were strongly supportive of communist rule might be more likely to adopt attitudes in line with communist ideology. But at the same time, children of parents who were long-term opponents of communist

²⁷Interestingly, the only one of these works that focuses on a post-communist country (Mishler and Rose 2007, analyzing data from Russia) not only emphasizes the possibility of lifelong socialization but actually finds strong affects for what they call “adult relearning” in the post-communist context.

²⁸As we discuss in more detail below in Section 1.6 and in Chapter 9, we actually find more evidence in favor of an adult exposure effect than a childhood exposure effect! Only in the case of gender equality do find an effect for child but not adult exposure. In the other three issue areas, there is a much larger effect for adult socialization; this is most extreme in the case of attitudes toward democracy, where there is apparently no effect for childhood exposure. See as well Mishler and Rose (2007).

rule could be expected to do exactly the opposite. Thus in the language of this book, we could expect parental socialization either to function as an *intensifier* of or to provide *resistance* to communist exposure, conditional on the political proclivities of the parents. In pragmatic terms, this means that an analysis of the effect of parental socialization as a moderator of communist exposure requires data that allows an estimate of the pro- or anti-communist nature of a respondent's parents. Unfortunately, this is not possible for our primary analyses because of the limitations of our data, but it is a topic to which we turn in the supplementary analysis in multiple chapters.

Taken together, all these *intensifying* and *resistance* variables can be thought of in two ways. First, they are potential modifiers of the effect of a year of exposure to communist rule on attitude formation. If we accept the notion that a year of communist exposure does not have the same effect on all individuals in all countries and at all time periods, then we need these *intensifying* and *resistance* variables (and the related hypotheses laid out in Chapter 2, Section 2.3) in order to better specify our *living through communism* model. However, there is another way to think about these variables, which is as a first step to better understanding the *mechanisms* by which exposure to communism translates into attitude formation. For example, if we find that youth exposure, communist schooling, and parental socialization (from pro-communist parents) all increase the impact of communist exposure on pro-regime attitudes, then it would suggest that the mechanism by which this occurs flows through traditional methods of political socialization such as schools and family life at a young age. If on the other hand the most important factors turn out to be pre-communist regime type, development, and literacy, then it would suggest that pre-communist conditions were paramount for conditioning the impact of exposure to communist rule. Alternatively, if we find that factors such as urban residence, being a male, Communist Party membership, and communist education predominate, then it might suggest that exposure to communist propaganda is an important mechanism for picking up pro-regime attitudes.

1.3 LIVING IN POST-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

There are of course a wide variety of factors that could explain why opinions held by post-communist citizens on politics and economics appear to diverge from those held by people in other parts of the world that have nothing to do with the experience of having lived through communism. Collectively, we refer to these explanations as flowing from the fact that the people whose opinions are being surveyed are *living in post-communist*

countries. Post-communist countries—like any collection of countries with some degree of commonality among them—will differ from other countries in appreciable ways.²⁹ Certainly it is possible that these characteristics could explain why citizens hold different opinions on politics, economics, and social relations.

As was already discussed previously in Section 1.1 of this chapter, the first place we want to look for potential distinguishing characteristics of post-communist countries is in the types of countries in which communist regimes came to power. In other words, the first test of the *living in* post-communist countries model will be to see if *pre-communist* conditions can explain why post-communist citizens hold different attitudes than people in other parts of the world. Setting aside the thorny question of the mechanism by which attitudes might be transmitted across generations, there are a number of features of pre-communist societies that we might expect to be correlated with attitudes in the post-communist era. In particular, levels of socio-economic development (e.g., wealth, literacy, urbanization), cultural history (e.g., religious tradition, imperial/colonization history), and prior regime type all would seem to be important factors (Bunce 2005; Bădescu and Sum 2005). Recent literature in both political science and economics has pointed as well to the role of geography (e.g., distance from the equator, being landlocked) in influencing long-run developments in both economics and politics (Sachs and Warner 1997; Hall and Jones 1999; Acemoglu et al. 2001; Easterly and Levine 2003; Collier and Hoefler 2003; Rigobon and Rodrik 2005).

In addition to the strong theoretical rationale for including pre-communist conditions in our study, accounting for these factors in our analyses has two additional empirical advantages. First, as we go on to analyze all the other variables in our models that occur after the imposition of communist regimes (i.e., contemporaneous conditions, end-of-communism conditions, and exposure to communism), we can do so with greater confidence that our findings do not suffer from omitted variable bias. But perhaps even more importantly from the perspective of this book, looking at the correlation between attitudes and pre-communist conditions provides us with one completely clean test that could supply evidence that contemporary divergence in attitudes between post-communist citizens and citizens from other parts of the world are *not* a function of communist-era legacies. While obviously the quality of data from that far in the past makes this a difficult test, it is an important part of our empirical effort.

²⁹We take up the question of why we focus on *post-communist* countries as opposed to a different collection of countries at the start of Chapter 2.

Of course, the most obvious candidates for demonstrating that the divergent attitudes of post-communist citizens are due to *living in post-communist countries* are the conditions on the ground at the time attitudes are being surveyed. Perhaps the simplest way this could occur would be if people's preferences, evaluations, and political behavior were a function of their *sociodemographic characteristics* and if post-communist countries had different sociodemographic makeups than other countries. Consider the following highly stylized example. Imagine a world with three income categories (high, medium, and low) and three education categories (post-secondary, secondary, and less than secondary). If all political preferences were a direct function of income and education, then we would expect societies with similar distributions of education and income to have similar distributions of political preferences. Now imagine that preferences for extreme forms of redistribution were largely concentrated among those with high levels of education and low incomes. If in Country A, which is non-communist, there are very few highly educated poor people (either because there are few poor people, or few highly educated people or because income is very highly correlated with education), then that country would have a very small proportion of the population supporting extreme forms of income redistribution. In contrast, if in Country B, which is post-communist, income was unrelated to education or if both poverty and higher education were both very prevalent, then we might find a much larger proportion of the population supporting extreme forms of income redistribution. This would hold despite the fact that in both countries, *individual preferences were generated in exactly the same manner* (and thus had nothing to do with *living through* communism): as a function of income and education. Thus, despite identical processes of individual preference formation, the aggregate nature of preferences across the whole society would be different, and we would find higher support for extreme redistribution in the post-communist country.

Moving beyond sociodemographic characteristics, we might also expect attitudes to be a function of *current economic conditions* (Mishler and Rose 1994, 1997, 2001; Tucker et al. 2002; Mason 1995). Consider again a highly stylized world, only now it is one in which one embraces markets as long as one's real disposable income has gone up in the past 12 months; conversely, if real disposable income has declined in the past 12 months, one is skeptical of markets. Now let us assume that in non-post-communist countries in the 1990s, at any given time 50% of citizens had incomes that were going up, while the remaining 50% had incomes that were going down. However, let us assume—not completely unrealistically—that post-communist economic transitions (Przeworski 1991; Svejnar 2000; Gould 2011) resulted in only 20% of the population of post-communist countries enjoying rising incomes, with 80% suffering from

falling incomes, in the same time period. Were we then to observe preferences for market versus state-run economies, we would find that citizens in post-communist countries were much more likely to be skeptical of markets (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2014). This would again be the case *despite the fact* that in all countries the determinants of attitudes toward markets were identical (i.e., solely determined by change in income).

Similarly to the economic conditions argument, we might expect citizens' political views to be a function of the political and economic institutions with which they interact in the political world. Again, let us consider a highly stylized example. Imagine that support for democracy was simply a function of whether one lived under a parliamentary form of government or presidential form of government. Let us suppose that in the former case, the average citizen supports democracy "a lot" (imagine this as a 4 on a 5-point scale), while the average citizen living in a presidential regime supports democracy only "a little" (say 2 on a scale from 1 to 5). If the rest of the non-post-communist world is evenly split between presidential and parliamentary systems of government but the post-communist world is made up exclusively of countries with presidential systems of government,³⁰ then the data would reveal that the average post-communist citizen supports democracy a little (say 2 on our 1–5 scale) whereas the average citizen in the rest of the world supports democracy somewhat (say 3 on our 1–5 scale). The key point from our perspective is that this finding would have nothing to do with the fact that post-communist citizens are somewhat less trusting of political parties because of decades of single-party rule; instead, it would be a function solely of the fact that post-communist countries have exclusively presidential systems of government.³¹

As we noted earlier in this chapter in Section 1.1, assessing the extent to which any of these contemporaneous characteristics—sociodemographic characteristics, economic conditions, and political and economic institutions—are legacies of communism will require careful attention to the particular variable in question. This is because once we get into the post-communist era, any condition measured at that point in time will have at least the potential of being in part a legacy of communism and in part a function of post-communism. Take unemployment rates in the 1990s, for example. The fact that many post-communist countries suffered from high levels of unemployment in the 1990s was undoubtedly in part due to

³⁰This is, of course, not the case in the real world, where plenty of post-communist countries have parliamentary systems of government.

³¹Astute readers will notice that we have not provided a list of specific variables that we will use in any of these categories. In order not to interrupt the flow of this introductory theory chapter, we have elected to hold off the discussion of individual variables until Chapter 3, where we address data, models, and methods.

decades of decisions about how to organize the economy under communist rule, but at the same time variation in unemployment across countries and over time would certainly have been affected by decisions made by *post-communist* governments (Tucker 2006; Frye 2002; Hellman 1998; Przeworski 1991). Each variable (or set of variables) that was found to play an important role in explaining divergence in attitudes would therefore need to be assessed in a similar manner before one evaluated the extent to which it represented empirical evidence of a legacy effect. Thus to be clear, any variable measuring conditions at the time of a survey in the post-communist period could help explain post-communist citizens' attitudes without necessarily being a legacy of communism. Thus the legacy status of that variable hinges on the extent to which the variable in question was affected by communist-era versus post-communist-era developments. Of course, this question is relevant only following a statistical assessment of whether the variable did indeed help to explain attitudinal divergence in the first place.

As noted previously, if we want to assess the effect of variables that clearly do *not* reflect any post-communist influences, then we need to measure conditions at the *end of the communist era* and before the advent of post-communism. To the extent that we are thorough in controlling for *pre-communist* context, then our measure of the *end of communism* context should be a reasonably good proxy for developments under communism.

Moreover, as long as we focus on factors that are distinctly linked to the communist experience,³² then examining the relative impact of *end of communism* variables on our dependent variables is a way of “unpacking” communism to see what exactly it was about communism that left behind a legacy. Was it the fact that communist governments were leftist or authoritarian? Or perhaps that communist countries were highly industrialized, had large state sectors, or had (relatively) lower levels of economic inequality? To address this question systematically, we will consider three sets of factors related to the communist experiences: developmental legacies of communism;³³ communism's redistributive/economic egalitarian policies;³⁴ and the authoritarian/leftist political character of communist regimes.³⁵

³²E.g., examining rainfall in 1989 makes little sense in this regard; examining industrialization, however, does.

³³We include in this category urbanization, industrialization, expansion of primary education, efforts at expanding literacy, and economic development (see Table 3.1 in Chapter 3).

³⁴We consider social welfare spending, size of the state sector, and income inequality (Gini coefficients) (see Table 3.1 in Chapter 3).

³⁵In our analysis, we examine government left-right orientation and degree of authoritarianism both individually and interactively (see Table 3.1 in Chapter 3).

1.4. DEMOCRACY, MARKETS, SOCIAL WELFARE, AND GENDER EQUALITY

Of course, if we wish to examine the effect of communist-era legacies on post-communist attitudes, we need to choose actual attitudes to examine. Even to explore four sets of attitudes thoroughly has required us to write a fairly long book, so we had to consider our choice of issues carefully. Ultimately, our goal was to examine the most important potential communist-era legacies in the realm of public opinion: democracy, markets, social welfare, and social relations (for which we explore attitudes toward gender equality). Thus, we chose these topics because of their relevance to communist ideology, not because we were aiming to maximize variation on a particular characteristic of the issues that would allow us to test hypotheses regarding cross-issue variation. That being said, by exploring overtly political, economic, and social topics we are tapping into some of the most important areas of the study of public opinion formation generally.³⁶

However, it is still useful to classify the issues we did choose to examine along theoretically relevant dimensions. Further, we can then use these classifications both to inform some of our expectations of variation in empirical findings across issues and to structure our interpretation of our findings. The three classifications we will consider are *centrality* to communist ideology (on which there is some variation, even though we “oversample” issues that score high on this dimension), divergence between *rhetoric and reality* in terms of on-the-ground implementation of relevant ideological tenets, and *popularity* of the issue among the populace. As we will go into greater detail on each of our four issue areas—democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality—in the following chapter, for now we limit ourselves to laying out how we see these issues varying along these three dimensions, along with a very brief discussion of the implications this holds for our remaining analyses.³⁷

Table 1.1 lays out how we classify our four issues—democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality—along these dimensions. A few quick words of explanation are in order. First, despite the eventual popu-

³⁶The one potentially “central” area of communist ideology this leaves out is the foreign policy dimension, which does not translate nearly as easily into a clear “legacy” position as the other four issues examined in this book. While “anti-Western” or “anti-American” attitudes could be an interesting subject for legacy analysis in future research, there was nothing inherent about communist doctrine that foretold an anti-Western foreign policy would emerge (given that Marx expected communist revolutions to start in the West).

³⁷To be clear, as we are not using these categories for any actual hypothesis testing, these categorizations are simply loose approximations of how we think the issues differ along these dimensions, and thus should not be interpreted as a result of any sort of rigorous coding scheme.

Table 1.1. Classifying Issue Areas

	<i>Ideological centrality</i>	<i>Match between reality and rhetoric?</i>	<i>Popularity</i>
Democracy	High	High	Low
Markets	High	Medium-high	Uneven
Social welfare	Medium	Medium-high	High
Gender equality	Low	Medium-low	Uneven

larity and importance of social welfare spending in the post-totalitarian communist regimes, social welfare provision was not originally a central tenet of communist revolutionary doctrine but was gradually added—based at least in part on non-communist welfare state models—and over time became one of the more popular aspects of communist rule (Cook 1993; Hoffman 2011; Lipsmeyer 2003). Second, the classification of “reality matches rhetoric” for democracy is especially complicated, because—as we detail in Chapter 4—Soviet communist regimes often referred to themselves as “democratic”; the ultimate example here is the German Democratic Republic. To the extent that we interpret democracy from a Western liberal democratic perspective, though, there was a very strong congruence between the regime’s rhetoric of opposition to democracy and the reality of no multiparty democracy. Accordingly, we have also coded the “popularity” of communist opposition to multiparty democracy as low on the grounds that so many of the efforts to fight back against—and eventually overthrow—communist rule were focused on efforts to increase political pluralism and, eventually, institute multiparty elections, but we realize that this may have varied quite a bit across the post-Soviet space. Markets are listed as “medium-high” congruence between rhetoric and reality because this varied substantially by country, although, as we detail in Chapters 2 and 5, even at their most open communist countries had much more extensive state control over of the economy than elsewhere. Moreover, as we discuss in Chapter 7, while in most cases communist regimes did not match their pro-gender equality rhetoric with consistent real-world action, there were important exceptions with respect to employment and, especially, schools. We also note that we have marked the popularity of gender equality as uneven to reflect the fact that while there were likely small portions of the population who felt this to be an important issue (especially among educated women), there were other portions of the population that were undoubtedly hostile to this idea.

Most importantly, though, readers should note that gender equality is distinguished from the other three issues along two of the three of the dimensions that we have highlighted: it was less central to communist ideology

and has a greater gap between rhetoric and reality.³⁸ This leads to two important takeaway points. First, it should perhaps not be that surprising that we find different results when looking at attitudes toward gender equality than we do when analyzing the other three issue areas. Second, when we do find different results for gender equality, we do not have the research design in place to really disentangle whether this is due to its lack of centrality in communist ideology or because of the gap between rhetoric and reality in the actual development of gender equality. While this would be an excellent subject for future research—teasing out the relative importance of centrality, rhetoric versus reality, and popularity on the likelihood of an issue areas exhibiting signs of a legacy effect—our current study was not designed with this goal in mind.³⁹

We leave thorough explanations of how to conceptualize and measure these four concepts—attitudes toward democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality—to the particular empirical chapters in which each is featured (Chapter 4–7, respectively). But with these four issue areas in hand, we can now turn to introducing our basic empirical strategy to examine the effect of communist-era legacies on public opinion in these areas in post-communist countries.

1.5. EMPIRICAL STRATEGIES

In this section we briefly lay out the empirical strategy we follow for answering the questions we have laid out above. This section is intended only to introduce readers to our general empirical approach; the entire purpose of Chapter 3 is to go into our methodological approach in much greater detail.

³⁸The likely popularity of gender equality under communism relative to the other three issue areas is a bit more complicated. On the one hand, in Table 1.1, it is somewhat in the middle of the pack as “uneven” in terms of popularity. On the other hand, there are good reasons to suspect that (a) popularity is heterogeneously distributed and (b) we could probably make some pretty good predictions about subpopulations that are more and less likely to support gender equality. For more, see the discussion in Section 7.1 of Chapter 7.

³⁹To reiterate, the issues areas were chosen largely because of centrality to communist ideology, and thus not to provide variation across levels of centrality, let alone the other categories. A research design that sought to disentangle the effects of centrality, gaps between rhetoric and reality, and popularity would seek to ensure both variation within these categories across cases, but also variation in combinations of the three sets of classifications across cases. This sort of study would require many more types of attitudes than we had space for in this book given the level of detail into which we decided to go for each issue area. It might be an interesting area for future research with a different sort of research design, but we would not be surprised if it was difficult to find appropriate questions for testing less central tenets of communist ideology on *existing* cross-national surveys; as it was, it was difficult for us to find enough questions in all cases to test the highly central issues we do test in this book.

1.5.1. *Inter-regional Comparisons*

In order to identify distinctive patterns of post-communist political attitudes, we use comparative survey data from both the post-communist world and, crucially, countries from outside of the post-communist world. Only by looking at the attitude or behavior in question both outside and inside the set of post-communist countries can we in fact determine whether there is a post-communist “difference” to be explained. The simplest and most direct way of doing so is to measure a quantity of interest in post-communist countries, measure the same quantity of interest in other countries, and then establish whether there is a statistically and substantively significant difference across the two.⁴⁰ So for example, if one wants to claim that there are lower levels of support for democracy in post-communist countries, then a first step would be to find a comparative survey project that measures levels of support for democracy cross-nationally—such as the World Values Survey, which we use here—then calculate the mean level of democratic support in post-communist countries, calculate the same values outside of the post-communist countries, and then compare the two.

In practice, rather than comparing the difference of means, we will run a multiple regression model with a *post-communist dummy variable* that uniquely identifies respondents who are being surveyed in post-communist countries. Our simplest models include only this dummy variable (plus control variables for the year of the survey) in order to establish that post-communist citizens indeed hold different attitudes; these are the models from which Figure 1.1 at the beginning of this chapter was derived. To test our *living in post-communist countries* models, we will then systematically add our pre-communist, contemporaneous (demographic, economic, and political), and unpacking communism variables to the model, in each case testing to see how the size and significance of the post-communist dummy variable is affected. To the extent that adding these variables reduces the size of the coefficient on the post-communist dummy variable, we can conclude the relevant *living in post-communist countries* variables are related to the post-communist attitudinal divergence. If it does not, we can dismiss that particular set of variables as being a potential source of the variation in attitudes between citizens of post-communist countries and citizens elsewhere. We also use this framework for initial exploration of our *living through communism* model by adding years of exposure to the analysis.⁴¹

⁴⁰For the moment, we set aside the question of the appropriate reference group of “other countries”; depending on the question, it could include all other countries in the world, advanced industrialized democracies, other European countries, other new democracies, non-democracies, etc. This point is addressed in much greater detail in Chapter 3.

⁴¹To reiterate, this is only the briefest of summaries of the methodological approach, and there are a myriad of other factors at work here as well; we explain all of these in great details in Chapter 3; see especially Section 3.3.

1.5.2. *Intra-regional Comparisons*

For testing the *living through* communism model, we will also leverage variation *within* post-communist countries. These types of analyses will be most useful when we are interested in understanding the effect of variables that are hypothesized to increase either the *intensity* of or *resistance* to exposure to communism. There are both theoretical and methodological reasons for limiting these analyses to post-communist countries. We explain these in detail in Chapter 3, but the most intuitive explanation here is that many of our variables here make no sense outside of the post-communist context (e.g., how could you code a non-post-communist country in terms of whether communism was imposed from outside or came about as a result of homegrown movements?).

1.5.3. *Intra-country Comparisons*

All the previously described analyses will involve the pooling of survey data across multiple countries. While such a research design is justified by the fact that we need to compare the attitudes and behavior of ex-communist citizens to their counterparts in non-communist countries (as well as comparing attitudes and behavior across post-communist countries), such analyses will nevertheless raise concerns about the comparability of survey questions given cross-national cultural and linguistic differences in the absence of anchoring vignettes (King et al. 2003).

However, history has provided us with an interesting opportunity in this regard. The reunification of Germany in 1990 offers a methodological solution to this problem, because it allows us to compare the patterns of attitudes and behavior among East and West Germans, who share a common language and culture but of course differ in their exposure to communism. Since the two countries have had very similar—and in many cases identical—political institutions, such a comparison has the additional advantage of reducing the potential for omitted variable bias that may affect cross-country regressions. While demographic and developmental differences of course persist between West and East Germany, these are arguably captured by individual characteristics, such as household income, for which we can often control in our analyses. Thus, reunified Germany offers another opportunity to explore our hypotheses, only this time in a context that does not require cross-country analysis.⁴²

⁴²In certain limited instances, we may also be able to get similar within country leverage from analyses of Ukraine and Belarus, both of which include Western regions which were only incorporated into the Soviet Union after World War II and thus their inhabitants had shorter exposures to communism than their compatriots from the East. We do not take

1.5.4. Over-Time Comparisons

While our primary empirical analyses involve pooling all our empirical data and controlling for the year of the survey (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3 for details), there are other interesting questions to be asked about the temporal evolution of differences in post-communist attitudes, as well as regarding the relative importance of cohort effects. What is the half-life of communist attitudinal legacies and to what extent does it differ across different types of attitudes? To the extent that “normalization” (i.e., attitudinal convergence between citizens of post-communist and non-communist countries) occurs, is it the result of attitudinal changes in age cohorts that personally experienced communism, or is it largely driven by the generational replacement of communist with post-communist cohorts? With these questions in mind, we also provide over-time analysis that allows us to examine these effects in more detail; see Chapter 8 for details.

1.5.5. Data

We rely on a number different data sources for our analysis, all of which are explained in detail in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.4). These include two large cross-national survey data sets—the World Values Survey (WVS) and the European Bank for Recovery and Development’s Life in Transition Societies (LiTS) surveys—as well two single-country panel studies: the Hungarian Household Panel Survey and the Political Attitudes, Political Participation and Electoral Behavior in Germany Panel Study (hereafter German Election Panel Study). For the cross-national surveys, we then supplement the survey data with our own original collection of country-level and country-year-level aggregate variables that measure pre-communist conditions, end of communist-conditions, and contemporaneous demographic, economic, and political conditions at the time of surveys.⁴³

1.6. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

What do we learn from this enterprise? Many, many things of course (i.e., you should continue on to read the rest of the book!), but for now let us highlight five key overall conclusions. First and foremost, *living through*

advantage of such opportunities in this book but simply wanted to highlight them here as a potential source for future research (e.g., see Peisakhin 2015).

⁴³To be clear, while the overall collection of aggregate-level data is novel, we of course draw on a wide-range of sources to put this collection together, all of which will be documented in a supplemental online codebook. See Table 3.1 and the online codebook for details.

communism does a much better job of accounting for the attitudinal divergence of post-communist citizens than *living in* post-communist countries. At least one of us began this project with a strong predisposition toward thinking that *living in* post-communist countries—and especially economic conditions in those countries—would very likely explain away the attitudinal differences between citizens in post-communist countries and citizens in the rest of the world. However, after years of gathering data to try to make our *living in* models as thorough as possible, we simply cannot come to this conclusion: no matter what we add to these models, the differences do not go away. This is not to say that taking account of the fact that our post-communist respondents are *living in* post-communist countries does not explain away some of the differences in attitudes: in every chapter, there is always at least one battery of variables that does reduce the size of the difference substantially. That being said, the difference never disappears, and, moreover, in three chapters we find that when we use our fully saturated *living in* a post-communist country model (pre-communist conditions, and contemporary demographic, economic, and political variables), the gap in attitudes is always larger than when we started with just a simple bivariate model not taking account of any of the differences. Moreover, we can always reproduce a similar effect in just the German case.

Closely related, we find that the theoretical concepts of *intensity* of and *resistance to* exposure in our *living through* communism model are indeed a useful vehicle for capturing the reality that not all years of exposure to communism were created equally. As noted earlier, it is not the case that all the hypotheses we tested using this framework are supported empirically. Still, we do find a number of hypotheses that are supported by the data, and far more than we would expect to find by chance alone. Moreover, we also find a few that are consistently supported by the data across multiple chapters (e.g., the effects of late-communist growth, being a Catholic, living in an urban residence) and some that are largely not supported by the data (e.g., late-communist liberalization, having had a native communist regime, having only a primary education).

Third, something very different is going on in the case of attitudes toward gender equality than for attitudes toward democracy, markets, and social welfare. Not only is there *not* a post-communist gender equality surplus, but to the extent that we do find differences in post-communist attitudes, they are actually in the opposite direction from what we would have expected: post-communist citizens are *less* supportive of gender equality. By contrast, we do find what we would expect from a regime legacy perspective in the case of attitudes toward democracy, markets, and social welfare, with post-communist citizens having consistently less supportive views of the first two and more supportive views of the last.

Our fourth major finding may be of particular interest to behavior scholars who have previously worked on the question of adult versus childhood socialization. As noted previously, the major fault line in this academic debate revolves around the question of whether socialization occurs *only* during *childhood* or whether it continues on throughout one's lifetime; we are not aware of academic work claiming that socialization occurs only in adulthood. Our findings, however, suggest that something different might be going on in non-democratic contexts, perhaps because success in one's adult life might be more dependent on adopting regime values. More specifically, we find that adult exposure has the predicted effect on attitudes toward democracy, markets, and social welfare, while the effect of childhood exposure is nonexistent in the case of democracy, and only half the size of the adult effect in the case of attitudes toward markets and social welfare (with the last effect being only marginally significant as well). Interestingly, it is only in the case of attitudes toward gender equality that we find an effect for child socialization and not adult socialization. This actually fits nicely with the idea that the "rhetoric but not reality" of gender equality was reflected in not finding a pro-gender equality bias among post-communist citizens: arguably it was only in the schools that the reality of gender equality was present alongside the rhetoric.

Finally, when analyzing the temporal evolution of post-communist attitudes, the patterns we encounter are remarkably heterogeneous. Thus, at one extreme, we observe a large and virtually unchanged post-communist bias for social welfare, which even extends to cohorts with minimal personal communist exposure and suggests strong cross-generational transmission mechanisms. At the other extreme, views on gender equality converged rather quickly after the first few transition years. Perhaps the most interesting pattern was with respect to democracy and market support, where the early transition years witnessed a significant worsening of the post-communist distrust toward democracy and capitalism (driven primarily by cohorts with extensive communist exposure) followed by a gradual convergence after 2000.⁴⁴

1.7. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BOOK

Why study the effect of communist-era legacies on the attitudes of post-communist citizens? First, we believe it helps us understand the nature of post-communist politics better. Originally, the collapse of communism led observers to suggest that the region would be a *tabula rasa* on which new

⁴⁴See Chapter 8 for analysis of over-time trends.

institutions could be painted and politics and economics would be accordingly reshaped.⁴⁵ Since that time, however, study after study has demonstrated the fact that we cannot hope to understand post-communist politics without first taking account of what was left behind by communism.⁴⁶ However, most of this literature has focused on how the communist past has shaped either institutions (e.g., post-communist party systems) or the interests and choices of political elites. By comparison, the role of communist legacies in shaping political attitudes and behavior of citizens, which are the main focus of the present study, has received much less attention.⁴⁷

And while the topic of legacies generally has attracted quite a bit of attention among scholars of post-communist politics (Bernhard 1993; Haerpfer and Rose 1997; Stan and Turcescu 2000; Kopstein and Reilly 2000; Kurtz and Barnes 2002; Neundorf 2010), surprisingly little of this work has explicitly compared results in post-communist countries with results in other parts of the world.⁴⁸ Thus we hope that our work can provide another model for how to think about the study of legacies: that there are questions that are best answered by inter-regional comparisons either alone or in conjunction with intra-regional comparisons. In this book, we try to be very precise about the values of both approaches and the types of questions to which they ought best to be applied.

Beyond post-communist politics, however, the question of how the experience of living under one form of political regime affects attitudes held by those citizens after regime change is an important general topic. In political science, studies of the effects of the past on the present have been largely focused on the evolution of institutions (Thelen 1999; Pierson and Skocpol 2002; Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 2002); until re-

⁴⁵See, e.g., Di Palma 1990; Karl and Schmitter 1991. While taking Leninist legacies seriously, Geddes (1997) also argues that post-communist political attitudes were shaped decisively by newly constructed political institutions.

⁴⁶Although undoubtedly an incomplete list, see, e.g., Jowitt 1992; Crawford and Lijphart 1997; Fish 1998; Bunce 1999; Kitschelt et al. 1999; Grzymała-Busse 2002, 2007; Bunce 2003; Ekiert and Hanson 2003; Kopstein 2003; Vachudova 2005; Tucker 2006; Wittenberg 2006; Pop-Eleches 1999, 2007; Kitschelt and Bustikova 2009; Nalepa 2010; Dolenc 2013; Carter et al. 2016.

⁴⁷Although see Blanchflower and Freeman 1997; Alesina and Fuchs-Schündeln 2007; and Mishler and Rose 2007. To be clear, this is not to say there has not been important research on political attitudes and public opinion in post-communist citizens. See, e.g., Gibson and Duch 1993; Miller et al. 1994; Bahry et al. 1997; Cox and Powers 1997; Evans and Whitefield 1999; Anderson and O'Conner 2000; Brady and Kaplan 2012.

⁴⁸Although see the debates about the comparability of post-communist and other third-wave transitions (Bunce 1995, 1998; Schmitter and Karl 1994). Two other recent publications have taken a more broadly comparative approach: Carter et al. 2016, who examine the likelihood of democratic survival of post-communist states as compared with other third-wave democratizing states; and Djankov et al. 2015, who examine the post-communist "happiness gap" using data from 82 countries.

cently less attention has been paid to the subject of how the past affects political attitudes.⁴⁹ The general methodological approach we lay out—to assess differences between citizens in terms of attitudes, to attempt to explain away as much of these differences by *living in* features, and then to attempt to directly study the effect of exposure to the old regime—holds promise for understanding the effect of other types of regime change, such as moving from colonial to post-colonial rule or from military dictatorship to democratic competition. Furthermore, the *living through communism* model is purposely designed from a set of general principles—that individuals are exposed to regimes for different periods of time (*temporal exposure*), and that there are factors that can *intensify* the effect of that exposure and other factors that may increase *resistance* to that exposure—so that it can be applied in contexts beyond the post-communist transitions. And while we do focus on applications of the *living through* model for studying the effects of communism in particular in the following chapter, even then some of the variables that we will posit to be important in the communist context—such as prior experience with democratic rule or religious affiliation—may have value in additional contexts as well.

It is also our hope that the individual empirical chapters on attitudes toward democracy, markets, social welfare, and gender equality will each on their own contribute to the relevant literatures on these topics. At the very least, we hope to provide some of the most systematic evidence to date of the determinants of these attitudes among post-communist citizens, which can serve as a baseline for comparison for studies being carried out in other areas. But more optimistically, we hope that will raise new and interesting questions for people interested in the determinants of these different attitudes. Similarly, we hope that Chapter 8 will contribute to the ongoing debates about the relevance of post-communism as an analytical category (Bernhard and Jasiewicz 2015), about how to judge whether the post-communist transition is over (Shleifer and Treisman 2004, 2014), and more broadly about the half-lives of authoritarian regime legacies and the dynamics of post-authoritarian attitudinal change (Roberts 2004; Bernhard and Karakoc 2007).

Moreover, the framework we present in this book could certainly also be applied to other aspects of post-communist political behavior beyond attitude formation. For example, elsewhere we have examined the effect of communist-era legacies on the evaluation of political parties (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2011) and on civic participation (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2013). Natural extensions of our approach here could be to examine participation in elections in post-communist countries (Pacek et al. 2009), the

⁴⁹However, in recent years, a few studies have started to address the attitudinal effects of historical legacies more systematically (see, e.g., Peisakhin 2015).

incumbency disadvantage in post-communist countries (Roberts 2008; Pop-Eleches 2010; Klašnja 2015), and participation in protests (Robertson 2010). More generally, we can think about extending the framework beyond legacy effects on *attitudes* to effects on *evaluation* and *participation* as well.

Finally, we want to highlight the central puzzle that motivates us in writing this book. As communism collapsed in 1989, the enthusiasm for democracy in the region seemed as strong and vibrant as anywhere in human history. The fact that a few short years later a deficit in support for democracy emerged in the region is an important puzzle to be solved in its own right. The question of whether communism was successful in creating “Socialist Man”—a possible solution to this puzzle—also strikes us as an important question to be answered before we close the books on the communist experiment in Eurasia and Eastern Europe.

1.8. LAYOUT OF THE BOOK

The remainder of the book is laid out as follows. In Chapter 2, we elaborate further on the Soviet communist project and how it relates to our *living through communism* model, as well as why we have chosen to examine legacy effects in post-communist—as opposed to some other collection of—countries. In particular, we lay out the specific variables that we expect—based on the history of communism and how it developed in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—to have potentially increased the *intensity* of the communist message to which citizens were exposed and the *resistance* that citizens might have had to that exposure.

In Chapter 3, we turn to questions of data and methodology. We have chosen to devote a specific chapter to this topic so as not to interrupt the flow the empirical chapters with repeated methodological discussions that are important across multiple chapters—as well as to allow readers who are not interested in these topics to move quickly through the materials—but also to reflect growing interest in the field of political science in methodological transparency. We divide the chapter into three parts. In the first part, we introduce in much greater detail the intuition behind our methodological approach; our hope is that for those not interested in the details of statistical analysis, this section will suffice to understand why we are carrying out the analyses we do in the remainder of the book. In the second part, we provide information regarding the modeling choices we made in our analyses, our justification for doing so, and a discussion of some of the consequences of these choices for how we ought to interpret our findings. The third part describes both the survey data sets we analyzed and the aggregate-level data we collected to augment these surveys.

Our hope here is that the section can function almost as a stand-alone reference section that is easily accessible at any time during the reading of the book.

In Chapters 4–7, we present our empirical analyses of the determinants of attitudes toward democracy (Chapter 4), markets (Chapter 5), social welfare (Chapter 6), and gender equality (Chapter 7). Each of these chapters follows a similar pattern with a set of analyses that are consistent across all four chapters, followed by supplementary analysis that is specific to each chapter and allows us to examine a specific question of interest in more depth, and in particular to begin exploring the question of the *mechanisms* by which exposure may have impacted attitude formation. In Chapter 8 we revisit findings from all four of these chapters with an eye toward the temporal evolution of attitudes and an examination of cohort-level effects. In Chapter 9, we conclude the book by considering our results in toto, addressing what they suggest both for our understanding of post-communist politics and for the study of legacy effects more generally.

Before moving on, we close with a few very quick words on terminology. One phrase that always comes into question in these types of studies is what exactly we mean by “post-communist countries.” We are not interested here in whether terms like “post-communist” or “transition” imply some unalterable path toward one political outcome or another (Gans-Morse 2004; Roberts 2004). Instead, we merely use the term descriptively, as shorthand for identifying the successor states to the former Soviet Union, the former Yugoslavia, and the East European countries that at one time or another made up the old communist bloc.⁵⁰ Similarly, while there have been different types of “communist” experiences around the globe, we are referring particularly to the form of communism that took hold in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. While it would probably be more accurate to refer to this as “Soviet communism” or “Soviet-style communism” (and indeed occasionally we do use these terms), for the most part we will simply use the more efficient “communism” as shorthand for this particular communist experience. Finally, throughout the book we will be comparing citizens from post-communist countries with citizens from countries in the rest of world. While the technically correct way to refer to these people is as citizens of “non-post-communist countries,” we at times use the slightly more parsimonious phrase “non-communist” countries to refer to countries that are not former communist countries.⁵¹

⁵⁰Essentially, this latter category is the former members of the Warsaw Pact plus the former Yugoslav republics.

⁵¹As will be explained in Chapter 3, we exclude China and Vietnam from any comparative analyses.