

University of Pennsylvania
Department of History
History 390-001

Communism in Theory and in Practice: China, the USSR, and Their Allies

Professor Arthur Waldron
Fall 2016

Summary:

Communism was arguably the defining political movement of the last century. The idea that society could be fairer and wealthier under a different system captured the imagination of many nineteenth and twentieth century intellectuals. The systems were put into practice, most importantly, starting in 1917 in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1922-1991) and then in The People's Republic of China (1949--). From 1950 to 1959 these two vast states were close allies: their power and their ideology shaped the Cold War, as did the actions and reactions of the West, and of the allies of each. Thereafter each their pathways have divided. Communism was abolished in Russia on December 25, 1991: Russia has changed greatly since. When Mao died in 1976, the policies he had defined in 1969 at the key party congress and his protégé were discarded and arrested. After the Tiananmen massacre of June 4, 1989 China's Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997) instituted dramatic economic changes but did not discard communism as an ideology nor change the fundamental political system.

This course treats Communism as a single phenomenon but in two countries, in each of which it followed sometimes distinct policies and certainly distinct pathways. We start by looking at the intellectual origins of communist ideas as well as the process by which communism came to power in Russia after World War I, in China after World War II.. Then we turn to shared ideas of social reconstruction and radical reform that were initially shared by both countries. For these, the Soviet Union, coming first, is the prototype. We address then the arrival of Communism in China, its initial close alliance with the USSR, and then the bitter break and hostility between the two that was evident by the early 1960s. Changes in each began when the great, defining dictators of the two states died, Stalin (1878-1953) and Mao (1893-1976).

To say that the material covered in this course is essential to understanding the century past and to preparing for what is to come is not immodest: it is simply a statement of fact. Every informed person must know something of Communism. This course can be taken profitably and successfully by freshmen as well as by graduate students (who should consult the instructor about bureaucratic details).

Course Requirements:

The course consists of two lectures per week (12:00-1:30) in Claudia Cohen Hall Room 402; regular mid-term and final examinations, and a short (8-12 page) interpretative (not research) paper on a topic of your choice.

Instructor:

Arthur Waldron has been the Lauder Professor of International Relations in the Department of History at the University of Pennsylvania, since 1998. He works mostly on the history of Asia, China in particular; the problem of nationalism, and war and violence in history.

Educated at Harvard (A.B. '71 *summa cum laude* Valedictorian, PhD '81) and in Asia where he lived for four years before returning to Harvard. Since then he has made perhaps forty trips to China, one in the company of a presidential candidate. At Harvard he majored in the History of Science working with the great Darwinists Ernst Mayr (1903-2005) and E. O. Wilson (1929-). In graduate school studied China and Inner Asia primarily, but also did fields in Classical, Russian, and Soviet history. He first visited the Soviet Union in 1967; subsequently he has spent a semester at the former Leningrad State University in St. Petersburg, and made six additional trips, three to the Russian Republic where he represented the United States at a “track two” conference in a forest conference center outside Moscow. Before coming to the University of Pennsylvania, he taught at Princeton University, the U.S. Naval War College (Newport, RI) and Brown University. His publications include *The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth* (1989) also in Chinese and Italian; *The Modernization of Inner Asia* (1991); *How the Peace Was Lost: The 1935 Memorandum "Developments Affecting American Policy in the Far East" Prepared for the State Department by John Van Antwerp MacMurray* (1992) also in Japanese; *From War to Nationalism: China's Turning Point, 1924-1925* (1995) also in Chinese, and (with Daniel Moran) *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (2003). His latest book, *The Chinese* should appear in 2017. In addition he has fourteen articles in peer reviewed journals, ten chapters in books, and two edited volumes in Chinese, as well numerous scholarly and popular reviews and journalistic essays, in Japan and England as well as the United States. Recently three major essays on Asian and World politics appeared in *Orbis*.

In 2016 Professor Waldron participated in an important discovery, that during the ultra-secret US negotiations with China that Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger inaugurated at the end of the 1960s, Zhou Enlai, Kissinger's most trusted interlocutor, kept Chiang Kaishek in Taiwan fully informed—at a time when even Nixon's secretary of state was in the dark! Waldron used

Chinese sources to confirm what the great American scholar/diplomat Jay Taylor had deduced from sources in Taiwan.

In government, Waldron served as one of twelve members of the highly-classified Tilelli Commission (2000-2001), which, commissioned by the Congress, evaluated the China operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was also an original member of the Congressionally-mandated U.S-China Economic and Security Review Commission (2001-2003). He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and former Director of Asian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, as well as a Director of the non-profit non-partisan Jamestown Foundation in Washington, D.C. and senior fellow of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. A regular traveler, he has visited some fifty countries, in Asia and beyond. He has lectured all over the world, including Europe, Russia (in Russian), China (in Chinese), Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

Born in Boston in 1948 Professor Waldron married the former Xiaowei Yü (born Beijing) in 1988. With their two sons they live in Gladwyne, Pennsylvania.

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Office Hours: Th: 1:30- 3:00 PM (graduate students) 3:00-5:30 (undergraduates) and by appointment. If you can, please use email to let me know your ideas ahead if time)

Teaching Assistant:



Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein is a 2nd-year PhD student in history at Penn. His research interests include the history of communism, political oppression and social control, and his main area of research is North Korean history. Before coming to Penn, Benjamin received his MA in International Relations and International Economics, concentrating in Korean Studies, from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He is an East Asia contributor for *IHS Jane's Intelligence Review* and co-editor of North Korean Economy Watch (www.nkeconwatch.com).

Mr. Silberstein will hold a weekly office hour discussion on the material covered, at a time to be announced. Attendance is recommended as sadly we have no recitations in this course.

Requirements:**Lectures:**

Lectures will be from 12-1:30 Tuesday and Thursday in Claudia Cohen Hall 402.. You are expected to attend.

Readings: Expecting students to read one book a week each, on Russia and China, would be unrealistic. So we alternate the readings. *Note that the lectures will cover whatever went on in the other country so are essential.*

Examinations:

Midterm: November 22, in class.

Final: December 20, 12-2:00

Course Paper:

One class paper due on December 22 –hand it in at the examination—should be eight to twelve (8-12) typed double spaced pages, no more, to be delivered as directed. The topic choice is up to you, though we will provide suggestions. You are encouraged to refer to any or all of the readings, including those from the course bibliography that may not have been formally assigned. Newly declassified documents are full of fascinating material. Be creative. This is not a true research paper. Rather it should present your ideas on a topic of your choice (consult with our teaching assistants, or with me) based on perhaps some additional reading, from our course bibliography or of your own choice.

Citation system: That used by scientists, i.e. in text: “(Smith et al., 2002, pp. 201-203) with a full entry in a bibliography at the end of the paper.

Any good paper or examination essay should contain both argument (what you think stated clearly) *and counterargument* (that is, the strongest objections to your view, clearly expressed). The conclusion of any such piece of writing should, among other things, explain why you see your argument as stronger than your counterargument. Use *evidence* to support both elements.

We are very sorry that we cannot accept electronic submissions of written work. We simply lack the sort of industrial printing capacity that would require. So your papers and your final should be handed in typed on paper to one of our colleagues.

Grading:

Grading is an art not a science. We strive for fairness. If you do badly on one exercise, a good performance on another can outweigh that. Roughly speaking, the the mid-term examination about 20%, and the final examination and the paper about 40% each. If you *follow the directions* for the course you will do fine.

Calendar:***The Setting:***

First Lecture: August 30 T

Second Lecture: September 1 Th

Readings:

Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

Liu Shaoqi, *How to be a Good Communist*

[Bukharin and Preobrazhensky] *ABC of Communism*

The Wars:

Third Lecture, September 6 T

Fourth Lecture: September 8 Th

Readings:

John Reed, *Ten Days that Shook the World*

The Taking of Power:

Fifth Lecture: September 13 T

Sixth Lecture: September 15 Th

Readings:

Frank Dikötter *The Tragedy of Liberation*

The New Political Order: Terror:

Seventh Lecture: September 20 T Ben Silberstein

Eighth Lecture: September 22 Th

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn *The Gulag Archipelago* vol. 1

The New Economy:

Ninth Lecture: September 16 T

Tenth Lecture: September 18 Th

Readings:

M. Ilin *The Story of the Five Year Plan*

Triumphs:

Eleventh Lecture: September 20 T Beijing Destroyed and Reconstructed; Moscow's new architecture.
 Twelfth Lecture: September 22 Th Economic achievements

Readings:

Ostrovsky, *How the Steel Was Tempered*

The New Culture:

Thirteenth Lecture: September 27 T Socialist Realism; Lenin's Tomb
 Fourteenth Lecture: September 29Th High Maoism

Readings:

Solomon Volkov, *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*

October:

The Problem of Legitimacy

Fifteenth Lecture: October 04 T

Readings:

Tumarkin *Lenin Lives!*

October 06-09

Fall Break

Stalin:

Sixteenth Lecture: October 11 T
 Seventeenth Lecture: October 13 Th

Readings:

Svetlana Alliluyeva, *Twenty letters to a friend*
 Khrushchev, "The Secret Speech" *On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences*"
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/khrushchev/1956/02/24.htm>

Failure:

Eighteenth Lecture, October 18 T
 Nineteenth Lecture, October 20 Th

Readings:

Jasper Becker *Hungry Ghosts*
 Mao Zedong “Speech at the Lushan Plenum: PDF

Mao:

Twentieth Lecture, October 25 T
 Twenty-first Lecture, October 27 Th

Readings:

Edgar Snow *Red Star Over China*, Read only the section called “Genesis of a Communist”, in which Mao recounts his life—the only autobiographical narrative we possess.
 Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*

November:

The Falling Out:

Twenty-second Lecture: November 01T
 Twenty-third Lecture: November 03 Th

Readings:

Jay Taylor *The Generalissimo* pp. 454-607.

Mao on his Own:

Twenty-fourth Lecture: November 08 T
 Twenty-fifth Lecture: November 10 Th

Readings:

Ken Ling *The Revenge of Heaven*

Ways Out:

Twenty-sixth Lecture: November 15 T New Relations with the United States
 Silberstein
 Twenty-seventh Lecture: November 17 Th Problems with the United States

Readings:

Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington" PDF
 Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam" PDF
 Waldron, "China's Peaceful Rise Encounters Turbulence" PDF

Thanksgiving Week:

November 22 T	<i>Mid-term examination in class</i>
November 24-27	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>

*November-December****The Soviet Summation:***

Twenty-eighth Lecture: November 29 T
 Twenty-ninth Lecture: December 01 Th

Aleksandr Yakovlev, *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia*

The Chinese Question Mark:

Thirtieth Lecture: December 06 T	Where Did It Go?
Thirty-first Lecture: December 08 Th	Where is China Headed? Is She Communist?

Readings:

Richard McGregor *The Party*

To be read before the examination:

Gorbachev *Perestroika*
 Xi Jinping *The Governance of China*

You may expect a question.

December 20 Th	<i>Final Paper Due: Submit at beginning of exam</i>
December 20 Th	<i>Final Examination: 12:00-</i>
2:00 PM	

Course Bibliography:

This is not a reading list. It is for reference and will be constantly enlarged.

Margaret Cole, *et al. Our Soviet Ally: Essays* (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1943)

Robert Conquest. *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986)

Alfred B. Evans, Jr. *Soviet Marxism-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993)

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1999)

Ralph Fox *Lenin: A Biography* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933)

Maurice Hindus *The Great Offensive* (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1933)

Leszek Kolakowski and P.S. Falla *Main Currents of Marxism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005)

Richard McGregor *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers* (New York: Harper, 2010)

Mao Tsetung *A Critique of Soviet Economics*. Tr. Moss Roberts (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1977)

Jack F. Matlock, Jr. *Autopsy on an Empire: The American Ambassador's Account of the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Random House, 1995)

S. A. Malsagoff, *An Island Hell: A Soviet Prison in the Far North* (London: A. M. Philpot Ltd., 1926)

Boris Pasternak, *I Remember: Sketch for an Autobiography* (New York: Pantheon, 1959)

Daniel Peris, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998)

Richard Pipes, ed. *The Unknown Lenin from the Secret Archive* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996)

Arthur Ransome, *Russia In 1919* (New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1919)

John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook The World* With a Foreword by V. I. Lenin (New York: International Publishers, 1967)

Andrei Sakharov, *Memoirs* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990)

Mikhail Sholokov *All Quiet Flows the Don* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934)

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956 I-II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973)

Vladimir V. Tchernavin. *I Speak for the Silent: Prisoners of the Soviets* (Boston and New York: Hale, Cushman & Flint, 1935)

Nina Tumarkin *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult In Soviet Russia* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1983)

Solomon Volkov. *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979)

Alexander N. Yakovlev. *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000)

24 August 2016