

**OLLI Syllabus. "The Rise and Fall of World Communism in the Twentieth Century," January 23 – February 27, Tuesdays, 10am to Noon. Freight & Salvage, Addison St., Berkeley**

**Instructor: George Breslauer, UCB Professor of Political Science**

**Twelve lectures of 45-50 minutes each: two lectures per meeting.**

**Optional readings:**

**David Priestland, *The Red Flag! A History of Communism* (Grove Press, 2009) OR**

**A. James McAdams, *Vanguard of the Revolution: The Global Idea of the Communist Party* (Princeton UP, 2017);**

**Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, third edition (The Free Press, 1999)**

**John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (Penguin Books, 2005)**

**Below, I suggest chapters from the McAdams book that are most pertinent to given lectures.**

**The rise and fall of world communism was one of the great dramas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, born in wars (World War I, World II), offering an alternative modernity to that of the capitalist world, and ultimately succumbing to the pressures of Cold War, capitalist globalization, and popular disaffection. The result was either systemic collapse (the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe) or a fundamental alteration of key features of the communist system (China, Vietnam). Beyond that, a few hangers-on remain: North Korea, Laos, and Cuba, while many non-ruling communist parties have transformed themselves in either a more-radical (in some Third World countries) or more social-democratic (Italy, France, Spain) direction. We will trace communism's origins in Marxism and Leninism, its victory in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, its construction of an international sub-system (the "world communist movement"), its spread throughout Europe and Asia (plus Cuba), and its ultimate demise or alteration. What did communist revolutions, states, and non-ruling communist parties have in common, in both their domestic and international orientations? How did they differ from each other? What were the appeals of communism that allowed them to come to power? Why did international communism fracture into competing models of domestic and foreign relations? Why did the Soviet Union and, with it, the world communist system ultimately collapse? Is there a future for new communist states?**

**January 23, 2018: McAdams, ch. 1**

- 1. Patterns of Communist Revolution and Governance**
- 2. The Communist "Achievement": A Balance Sheet**

**January 30, 2018: McAdams, chs. 2, 3, 4**

- 3. What were Marxism and Socialism?**
- 4. What was Leninism?**

**February 6, 2018: McAdams, chs. 5 and 7**

- 5. What was Stalinism?**
- 6. Key Questions about Stalinism (and why they matter)**

**February 13, 2018: McAdams, chs. 6 and 10**

- 7. What was Maoism?**
- 8. The Sino-Soviet Schism and the “World Communist Movement”**

**February 20, 2018: McAdams, chs. 8, 11, 12, 13**

- 9. Modes of Opposition to Stalinist and Post-Stalinist “Bureaucratism”**
- 10. The Gorbachev Revolution and the Collapse of Communism in the SU and East Europe**

**February 27, 2018: McAdams, ch. 9**

- 11. The Chinese Economic Miracle Since Mao and the Future of “Market Leninism”**
- 12. The remainders: North Korea, Cuba, Laos. Is there a future for Marxist-Leninist Revolutions?**