

LIST I

HIU34039/30. The Secret Police in Communist Europe, 1917-1989, I and II (Molly Pucci)



Czech Author Milan Kundera under surveillance in Prague

In this module, we trace the role of secret police forces in communist states and societies through the rise and fall of communism in twentieth century Europe. Who were the secret police? How did this institution change over the course of the twentieth century? How did secret police officials impact intellectual thought and everyday life in communist societies? To examine these periods, we study a variety of primary sources, including interviews with secret police officials, court records, dissidents' writings, photographs taken with hidden cameras, victims' memoirs, films, and poetry. We discuss the identities of secret police officials, the nature of resistance to communist dictatorships, interrogations, foreign espionage, and the technology of surveillance. We end by reflecting on contemporary discussions about the history of communism in Europe. In Hilary term, we will focus on the Cold War and the influence of the secret police on cultural and social life under communism from the death of Stalin in 1953 to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.