

LIST II

MICHAELMAS TERM. AVAILABLE TO ALL JS STUDENTS AND TO SS NMS STUDENTS

HIU34523 **Worlds of Dissent: Dissidents and Resistance in Communist Europe (Molly Pucci)**

Assessment: Essay 1 40% /Essay 2 60%



Lech Wałęsa and the Solidarity Movement in Poland



Václav Havel and the Charter 77 signatories

East European dissidents were the most influential political and moral voices in late communist Europe. In this course, we examine the nature of resistance and dissent to communist rule from the 1960s to the 1980s. We discuss the politics of communist dictatorship and the culture of resistance through dissidents' writings, films, plays, philosophical texts, secret police files, and prison diaries. The focus is the rise of "anti-politics" in Hungary, Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, the human rights movement in the Soviet Union, and the Solidarity movement in Poland. We ask what made these movements specific to each country, the interconnections between them, and the international context of détente and the Cold War in which they arose. We end by discussing the role of dissidents in bringing down the Berlin wall in the revolutions of 1989 and the paradoxes of power as several (Lech Wałęsa and Václav Havel) went from the fringes of politics to the presidencies of post-communist states.