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978-0-521-06383-8 - Ideology in a Socialist State: Poland 1956-1983

Ray Taras

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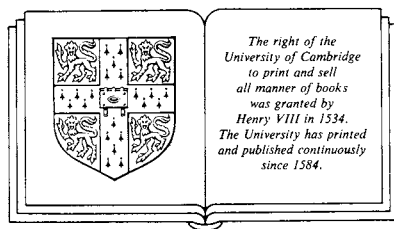
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*For Małgorzata and Michał*

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## Preface

This study sets out to examine the role of ideology in a socialist state and the way it may change over time. More specifically, it focuses on ideological developments in Poland. The period covered is from October 1956, when Gomułka acceded to power, to the end of 1983, when both Solidarity and martial law were treated as history by the Jaruzelski leadership.

Research for this study was carried out in Poland in the period between October 1977 and June 1982, whilst the author was completing a doctoral programme at the University of Warsaw. The present monograph is a shortened version of a dissertation submitted to that University in October 1981. Two new chapters – on the Solidarity and martial law periods – have been added since. I would like to emphasise that responsibility for the overall content of the present study is mine alone.

The analytical framework of the study focuses on official discourse of party rulers and was adopted well before the birth of Solidarity. Theoretically it would have been possible to adjust the research design after August 1980 to include Solidarity's discourse as well. But the enormous scholarly interest that the movement provoked, and still inspires, allows the author to rest easy that what he did not undertake in this study has been more than adequately undertaken by others. Moreover it is my belief that not enough attention has been paid to the rulers' view of the events between 1980 and 1983; this monograph seeks to fill this gap.

Chapters 1 and 2 review conceptual and methodological approaches to the study of ideology. These include the views of Western social scientists and their Polish counterparts. Chapters 3 to 8 present empirical findings on the functioning of ideology in Poland between

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1956 and 1982 in selected issue-areas. Finally Chapter 9 interprets these findings, discusses ideological developments after martial law was ended in mid 1983 and considers the relevance of ideology to the modern socialist state.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance extended to me by a number of institutions, in Poland and elsewhere, which permitted the completion of this study. Firstly I am grateful to the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw, and its members who aided and encouraged me during the period I was registered in the Institute.

Secondly I am indebted to the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which awarded me a doctoral fellowship enabling me to remain in Poland and observe its political and ideological developments at first hand.

Thirdly I wish to thank the Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Michigan, and its Director, Professor Zvi Gitelman, for providing resources to update this study during the 1982–3 academic year.

A number of individuals helped immeasurably to improve this work. Professor Jerzy Wiatr (Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw) gave invaluable advice whilst I was completing earlier drafts. Professors Jean Laponce (Department of Political Science, University of British Columbia) and Franciszek Ryszka (Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences) provided constructive critiques at a later stage. I also received much intellectual inspiration for this study from Professor Winicjusz Narojek (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences). At the most crucial, final stage in the preparation of this typescript, an anonymous reader of Cambridge University Press offered the professional advice needed to transform a dissertation into something more scholarly. I am grateful to my editors at CUP, Stephen Barr and Michael Holdsworth, for constant encouragement and interest. Finally I would like to thank Professor David Lane (Department of Sociology, University of Birmingham) for the intellectual and practical help he has given me over the past ten years.

It is my hope that this monograph will contribute to an understanding of recent events in Poland by looking at how its leaders have perceived and interpreted the world around them.

*Lexington, Kentucky,  
January 1984*