In this timely book Jonathan Valdez explores the role of ideology in the maintenance and subsequent collapse of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe. He begins by examining how to define ideology, proposing that it should not be viewed as any specific body of thought but as the interpretation of a body of thought for a political purpose. Valdez then looks at how Marxism-Leninism was used to legitimize Soviet influence. He shows how it was interpreted to rationalize policy actions, to communicate Soviet intent and policy desires to East European elites, and to explain change in socialist systems.

Valdez argues that the use of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism to perform various functions ultimately brought about a change in the basic assumptions of the theory itself. This resulted in the abandonment of the previous insistence on a universal model of socialism and of the idea that the international interests of the socialist bloc must take precedence over individual national interest. Soviet influence in Eastern Europe rested on little else than these ideological principles and consequently stood little chance of surviving their re-interpretation. Finally Valdez assesses the re-interpretation of the fundamental principles of the Soviet–East European relations by reformist scholars in the Soviet Union, and the response by conservative members of the party apparatus.

By focusing upon both the political debates between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the political uses of ideology within that relationship, Jonathan Valdez makes an important and innovative contribution to the study of Soviet external relations. *Internationalism and the ideology of Soviet influence* will be widely read by students and specialists of Soviet and East European studies, international relations and political science.
INTERNATIONALISM AND THE IDEOLOGY OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE

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89 Jonathan C. Valdez
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84 George O. Liber
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1923–1934

83 Christoph Bluth
Soviet strategic arms policy before SALT

82 John P. Willerton
Patronage and politics in the USSR

81 James Hughes
Stalin, Siberia and the crisis of the New Economic Policy

80 Iljana Zloch-Christy
East-West financial relations
Current problems and future prospects

79 Michael D. Kennedy
Professionals, power and Solidarity in Poland
A critical sociology of Soviet-type society

78 Gareth M. Winrow
The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa

77 Jozef M. van Brabant
The planned economies and international economic organizations

76 William Moskoff
The bread of affliction: the food supply in the USSR during World War II

75 Yaacov Ro’i
The struggle for Soviet Jewish emigration 1948–1967

74 Graeme Gill
The origins of the Stalinist political system

73 Santosh K. Mehrotra
India and the Soviet Union: trade and technology transfer
INTERNATIONALISM AND THE IDEOLOGY OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE

JONATHAN C. VALDEZ
University of California, Los Angeles
To my mother, for the greatest gift of all.
Contents

Acknowledgments

Introduction

1 Ideology and the ideologists

2 The ideological basis

3 Contradictions and internationalism in the 1970s: the Euro-communist challenge

4 Socialist internationalism, 1980–1989: decline of a concept

5 Socialism redefined

6 Ideological debates and Eastern Europe

Appendix

Notes

Bibliography

Index
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The US Board of Geographic names transliteration system is used for all but those names and terms which have commonly accepted spellings in the West. Gorbachev and perestroika, for example, should literally be Gorbachëv and perestroiká, but will be rendered in their more familiar form except where transliterated from the original Russian.