The article scrutinises the mechanisms for exerting political social and ideological power in the People’s Republic of Poland, beginning with a sociological description of the existence of a totalitarian state, where the primary role is performed by a strategy aimed at generating internal conflicts which lead to the atomisation of a society and the decomposition of its collective identity. This is followed by a presentation of the basic sociological mechanism for achieving and maintaining such a state, in other words, the security apparatus, control over information, together with the propaganda apparatus, and political and economic control. While the relevant literature prevailing on Poland’s publishing market explains the social mechanisms by referring to historical facts, this article reverses the logic of the discourse, attempting to explain the dynamics, directions and consequences of an historical process and pointing instead to the factors which shaped the motivation, attitudes and beliefs of Polish society, in other words, everything which influences real social behaviour and actions. The analysis therefore bypasses the issues of the police and military apparatus, which constituted the basic instruments for the exercise of power in the Stalinist epoch and have now been cognitively exploited anyway. On the other hand, more attention is paid to the emblems of symbolic power, intensively resorted to in the process of the more or less effective implementation of the ideal of ‘Soviet man’ (*homo sovieticus*) in Poland and other ‘people’s democracies’.

Tags: security apparatus, atomisation, *homo sovieticus*, social control, PRP, propaganda, revolution, sociotechnique.