

Bogdan **Sekściński**, Polish Roads to Socialism. The Sovietization of Tradepeople in the Lublin Region (1944-1954)

Summary

The article concerns the policy of communistic authorities towards the private trade sector in the Lublin region between 1944 and 1954 (the policy was analogous in entire Poland), especially during so-called "the battle for trade", the aim of which was a definite termination of the class of traders. The sovietisation of trade in post-war Poland, more commonly known as "the battle for trade" was one of the most principal nationwide undertakings by the pro-Stalinist communistic regime of that time managing Poland and appointed by Joseph Stalin, the purpose of which was the general sovietisation of the Republic of Poland before the country could finally join the structure of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The prelude to sovietisation in the Lublin region occurred at the turn of 1946 and 1947. The climax took place between 1947 and 1948 and the period of decadence between 1949 and 1951, although it can be accepted that actually "the battle for trade" was going on until 1989 that is, until the time of political transformation in Poland and the return to the free-market economy. During the period of "the battle for trade", as the result of repressive policy of the communistic authorities towards traders, the private trade sector almost entirely disappeared. The total termination of trade resulted in the fact that people in cities and the countryside lacked sufficient supplies of basic foodstuffs and industrial articles. Badly managed nationalized trade sectors, state-owned and cooperatives, were unable to provide the country with proper food supplies. The communistic regime and its incompetent economical policy caused chaos but attempted to soothe it by delivering basic foodstuffs and introducing the system of food ration coupons temporarily, which became the characteristic means of food distribution in the period of the People's Republic of Poland.