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ETHNOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES OF WESTERN PODILLYA: HISTORY OF FORMATION AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Pavlo Smoliak, Oleg Smoliak

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Abstract: *The article analyzes the historical preconditions for the formation of the West Podillya region on the basis of ancient sources and modern literature. The historical and political factors that influenced ethno-regional consciousness of the population residing in the region, especially in the border areas, are outlined as being the reinforcing factor for ethnic self-preservation and identity. Due to the analysis of the ancient chronicles, as well as the works of well-known ethnologists, the ethnographic term „Podillya” was defined as well as its origin, etymology and peculiarities of interpretation. There are three parallel interpretations of the term „Podillya” giving geographical, administrative and ethnographic views in scientific discourse. The most legitimate in this case is geographic interpretation, because it is devoid of political background and regulated by historiography. The article postulates that an important factor in identifying the characteristic features of the West-Podillya region is the peculiarities in certain customs and rituals, their terminological specifics, regional consciousness, being almost completely lost in the region under study, although in the late XIXth and early XXth centuries they were inherent to many inhabitants of Podillya, as well as a number of other specific features that give grounds for a specific regionalism and localization of the territory.*

Keywords: ethnographic region, chronicles, ethnologists, ethnic groups, regional consciousness, locals.

The territory of the ethnographic region of Podillya, especially its western part, has not been sufficiently studied in Ukrainian ethnology to this day. This is due to the historical instability of the borders of this territory. For a considerable period it was a part of the Galician Principality, the Polish Kingdom „several times”), the Lithuanian state, the Turkish Sultanate, and the Russian and Soviet empires.

During their rule political and administrative boundaries changed every time with the change of metropolis. Accordingly, the ethno-cultural vectors and identities of the people living on these territories also changed. Historical and political factors influenced their ethno-regional consciousness, especially in the border areas and were a unifying factor for ethnographic self-identity and survival.

The name „Podillya” is of Ukrainian origin. It means a territory, or a locality, which is placed on the valley of any raised terrain. The famous Ukrainian historian M. Symashkevych noted to the point: „*This is the most correct and originally Slavic name of our land „territory”, which is found in the most*

ancient historical records”¹ Similarly this region is named in the letter dated 1432 of Lithuanian prince Švitrigaila to Prince Paul „Master of Prussia”.²

Later the chroniclers Grabianka and Velychko of the Southern Rus’ used the name „Podolye” or „Podolyye”. Actually the name „Podillya” is of later origin. This is a literal translation from the Latin „Podolia”, which originally was mentioned by the Polish chroniclers and then in later acts and chronicles of Rus’.

As M. Symashkevych notes, „*such a name is fully suitable for our locality, which geographically is not a properly complete and independent territory, but only the lower part of the Galician-Russian principality, which the ancient chroniclers referred to according to the geographical location and often was named as „Rus’ Mountainous” or „Mountainous Country*”.³

Probably the name „Podillya” appeared for the first time in the XIV century in the letter of Prince Alexander Koriatovych „*the letter is retained in the Smotrych Dominican monastery) and dates back to 1375. In the letter the prince calls himself „Lord of the Podillya Land*”⁴ the name had been established in this area since the time of Lithuanian rule. By that time it had had the name Ponyzzya „Lowlands),⁵ which is synonymously close to the term Podillya. As M. Symashkevych notes, these two names are derived from the reduction of the earlier names of this area „Lower Rus’” and „Rus’ Dolna”.⁶

The term Ponyzzya „Lowlands” had not stay long for this territory and almost completely disappeared from the Rus’ chronicles from the middle of XIII century. Since XIV century it was replaced by the term „Podillya”, which eventually gave name to the Podillya Principality, and later Podillya Province.

It is known that neither The Tale of Bygone Years nor Kiev Chronicle and the Galician-Volyn Chronicle give us information about the administrative territory known as „Podillya land” „Podol”, „Podolia”. In these sources Podillya stands under various other names. In particular, in the Galician-Volyn Chronicle dated the beginning of the XIII century-1205) it is called the Land of Rus’.

¹ M. Symashkevych, *Historical-geographical and ethnographic essay of Podolia*, p. 2.

² N. M. Karamzin, *Note to the history of the Russian state*, volume 5, Saint Petersburg, Printing House of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1852, p. 192.

³ M. Symashkevych, *Historical-geographical and ethnographic essay of Podolia*, p. 2.

⁴ *Acts relating to the history of Southern and Western Russia, collected and published by the Archeographic Commission*, volume 1, 1361-1598, Saint Petersburg, Printing House of E. Prats, 1863, p. 21.

⁵ N. M. Karamzin, *The history of the Russian state*, volume 3, Saint Petersburg, Printing House of E. Prats, 1842, pp. 153-161.

⁶ M. Symashkevych, *Historical-geographical and ethnographic essay of Podolia*, p. 2.

In our opinion the most specific was the information in the Lithuanian chronicle. In particular, it states that when the Lithuanian prince Algirdas defeated the Tatars in the Battle of Blue Waters the Koriatovich brothers possessed the Podillya land, built the cities of Smotrych, Bakota, Kamianets and after that „...all the cities of Podillya were built and all the Podillya land was inhabited”.⁷

Polish historian M. Strykowski in his work „Kronika” uses the term „Podillya” in the information about the events of the XI century. In his interpretation Princes Volodymyr and Vasylo were considered to be the rulers of Peremyshl and Podillya: „*Volodymyrko, the son of the ruler of Galicia receives from his father the possession of Zvenygorod and Podillya*”.⁸

Unlike Strykowski, Polish historian Jan Długosz in his work „*Historiae Polonicae*” mentioned the name „Podillya” only once, namely in 1352.⁹

Another Polish historian M. Kromer, like his predecessor Jan Długosz, refers to the mention of Podillya land as an affiliate of Poland „and, accordingly, uses this term by the same year-1352. According to Kromer, the Dniester River is the border between Dacia and Sarmatia and is called the land of Rus’ or Podillya”.¹⁰

M. Bielsky in his information dating from the XIV century did not mention Podillya land at all. For the first time the term „Podolskie krainy” was mentioned by Bielsky in 1403. „When, in his words, the Polish king, Vladislav, wanted to give the land of Podillya, Zhydachiv, Stryi, Shidlyv, Stebnitsya and Ustyia to the Lithuanian prince Švitrigaila”.¹¹

The terms „Podolia” were also mentioned in the Chronicles of P. Vlasts and in the Gustyn Chronicle. Information provided in the first source in particular refers to the Polish king Bolesław I the Brave „Bolesław I Chrobry”, who after having conquered the Ugrs, Saks and Czechs established the boundary of his possessions located between Kiev, Podolia and Lithuania.¹² And the Gustyn Chronicle, which is the

⁷ Ignacy Danilowicz, *Latopisiec Litwy i Kronika ruska: Z rekopisu sławiańskiego przepisane*, Wilno, 1827, p. 44.

⁸ Maciej Strykowski, *Kronika polska, litewska, żmódzka i wszystkiej Rusi*, volume I, Warszawa, 1846, p. 53, 104, 177, 210.

⁹ Joannis Dlugossi, *Historiae Polonicae. Curaet impensis A. Przędzkiego*, volume 12, Cracoviae, Typ. Czas, 1873, p. 245.

¹⁰ *Kronika Polska Marcina Kromera, biskuba Warmińskiego*, Księga XXX, Sanok, Nakład i druk K.Pollaka, 1857, p. 621.

¹¹ K. J. Turowski, *Kronika Marcina Bielskiego*, Z. 5-8 i dod. nadzwyczajny, bezpłatn, Sanok, Nakład i druk Karola Pollaka, 1856, p. 249.

¹² A. Bielowski, *Pomniki dziejowe Polski (Monumenta Poloniae historica)*, Lwów, Nakł. Akad. Umiejętności w Krakowie, 1878, p. 203.

continuation of Hypatian Codex „also known as Hypatian Chronicle, Ipatiev Chronicle” mentions Podillya land with the city of Kamyanets for the first time in 1241.¹³

Ukrainian historian Ye. Sitsinsky gives some interesting considerations about the formation of the term „Podillya” in his work *Essays on the history of Podillya*. In particular, he notes that „the western part of Podillya land that stretched along the middle reaches of the Dniester was called as Ponyzzya-Lowlands during the pre-Tatar invasion that is the lower land in comparison with the neighboring mountainous highlands Galicia. The Lowlands once belonged to Galician principality. It occupied the left side of the Dniester in its middle course, from the left stream of the Strypa River and ended with the flow of the Murafa River”.¹⁴ Thus, this source noted the western border of Podillya for the first time in Ukrainian historiography. Ye. Sitsinsky further notes that „The eastern part of Podillya land, extending along the upper reaches of the Bug River and on the right and left of its tributaries was called as Pobożhzhya and stretched to Kiev principality. In the XIV century Ponyzzya and Pobożhzhya acquired the common name of Podillya, which also has a local Ukrainian origin and is the equivalent name to Ponyzzya Lowlands”.¹⁵

Sometimes Western Podillya is called the Galician Podillya in the scientific literature because the territory from the river Zbruch to the Strypa River „by our definition as far as to the Koropets River” was subjected to Galicia as the local province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹⁶

There are three parallel interpretations of the term „Podillya” giving geographical, administrative and ethnographic views in scientific discourse. The most legitimate in this case is geographic interpretation, because it is devoid of political background and is regulated by historiography.

We find supporting considerations in I. Oleksyshyn’s scientific research of „Podillya” as he notes: „From the geographic point of view Podillya it is a plateau separating the river Vereshchytsya from the Nadsyan lowlands in the west; the Bug River „section Khmilnyk–Vinnytsia-Tauriv” separates it from the Upper Dnieper „right bank” upland in the east; the river Murafa is in the south-east where Podillya hilly plateau gradually decreases and goes into the Black Sea bottom; in the north in many places it rapidly breaks over the rivers Bug and Styr to the adjoining Volyn; in the south the Dniester River separates the Podillya territory from

¹³ *Chronicle of Gustinsky Monastery. Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, volume 2, Saint Petersburg, 1843, p. 187.

¹⁴ Ye. Sitsinsky, *Essays on the history of Podillya. Part One. Essay first: Overview of the history of Podillya*, Vinnytsia, Publishing for studying Podillya, 1927, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

the Transnistria Lowland and the Pokutsk-Besarabsk Upland".¹⁷ Ethno-regional features such as historical boundaries of its borders, the common shared material and spiritual culture, and the ethnographic identity of the population give grounds to assume that this geographical area is an ethnographic region.

The oldest Ukrainian written sources *The Tale of Bygone Years* as well as Kiev and Galician-Volyn chronicles did not leave us any information about Podillya land and about its territory in particular.

Only at the end of the XVI century certain foreign travelers, writers, historians, including A. Gvagnin, M. Kromer and others drew attention to Podillya land as a very large territory. According to Gvagnin, „*Podillya region extends from the south borders with Moldova and Wallachia up to the Don River and the Black Sea up to the possessions of the Perekop Tatars*”.¹⁸

According to M. Kromer, the borders of Podillya reached the Dniester as far as to Bolgrad and farther to the east to the Dnieper and the Black Sea „*to the possessions of the Perekop Tatars*”. According to him, „...*the borders of Podillya are not known exactly since this territory is large and unpopulated*”.¹⁹

The most specific was the information in the Lithuanian chronicle. There are mentions about Podillya cities such as Smotrych, Bakota, Kamyanets, Skala, Chervonograd, Bratslav, Sokolets, and Vinnytsia. As we can see in the XV century the border of Podillya land did not cross the Dniester River in the south, and in the west it stretched along the river Strypa. In the south the territory of Podillya reached the Ushytsia River. If the new possessions of the Lithuanian princes were continuous and integrated, then the boundaries of urban settlements within these possessions were cut in the middle of the Murafa River and extended to Bratslav or Sokolets in Southern Buh. As can be seen from the chronicle, Podniprovska stripe of the present Kiev region was not part of Podillya: „...*prince Vytautas the Great went to Podillya land and ordered prince Švitrigaila to leave Kiev for Cherkasy and Zvenygorod*”.²⁰

The next source providing information about the territory of Podillya and its western lands in particular is the chronicle of the Polish

¹⁷ I. Oleksyshyn, „Podillya”, in *Ways of the Golden Podillya. Regional Historical Memorial Collection of Ternopilshchyna*, volume 1, Editorial Board: S. Konrad, V. Matskiv, R. Mykolayevych, Philadelphia, 1983, p. 213.

¹⁸ A. Gvagnin, *Z kroniki Sarmacyi europejskiej... Opisanie Polski, W. Ks. Litewskiego, wzziemie ruskiej, ziemi pruskiej, ziemi inflantskiej*, Kraków, 1860.

¹⁹ *Kronika Polska Marcina Kromera, biskupa Warmińskiego*, p. 621.

²⁰ Ignacy Daniłowicz, *Latopisiec Litwy i Kronika ruska: Z rekopisu sławiańskiego przepisane*, p. 44.

historian Maciej Strykowski. According to him, before prince Vytautas Lithuania bordered on the lands of Volyn, Podillya and Rus', and after Vytautas it was stretching out to the Black Sea as far as Ochakiv and along the River Don to Azov. According to Strykowski princes Volodymyr and Vasylo were considered to be the rulers of Peremyshl and Podillya. „*Volodymyrko, the son of the ruler of Galicia, received from his father the possession of Zvenygorod and Podillya*”.²¹ Most likely that M. Strykowski names as „Podillya” the area where, according to the Galician-Volyn chronicle, Ushytsia and Mykulyyn now Mykulyntsi of the Ternopil region were located. To this land Strykowski also allocated the cities of Zvenygorod, Sokolets, Kamyanets, Bakota, Smotrych, Bratslav, Vinnytsia, Khmilnyk, Zbarazh and Terebovlya. According to him the cities of Olesk, Buchach and Berezhany no longer belonged to Podillya, but to Pidgiryia. The city of Medzhybizh in Strykowski's „Chronicles” had been mentioned only since the half of the XV century „1449” that is from the time when the Poles proved their original possession of Podillya. According to Strykowski, this land was divided and converted into the Voivodeship of the Grand Duke of Lithuania in 1395, but his records did not specify any exact boundaries. Generally speaking, the boundaries of the Western Podillya, according to Strykowski, were defined by the river Strypa not reaching the city of Brody in the north.

Another Polish historian Jan Dlugosz had somewhat different vision of the borders of Podillya land. He defined the land of Podillya in the west by such border towns as Zhydachiv, Stryi, Shydlyv, Stebnytsa, Druchchya. Unlike Strykowski Dlugosz significantly extends the western boundaries, that is, he includes Opillya to Podillya or, most likely, combines them into one ethno-regional territory.²²

Polish historian M. Kromer mainly adheres to the views of his predecessor Dlugosz concerning the investigated region, although he criticizes him in some respects. Kromer, like his predecessor, had mentioned Podillya land for the first time in 1352 as the possession of Poland. According to Kromer, „*the Dniester River was the border between Dacia and Sarmatia, and the latter is called the land of Rus' or Podillya*”.²³ In his work Kromer lists the very same Podillya castles that were listed in the Lithuanian chronicle. A little later Kromer includes Olesko-1432, Zbarazh-1434, Medzhybizh and Khotyn-1448 into Podillya. That is, he

²¹ Maciej Strykowski, *Kronica polska, litewska, żmódzka i wszystkiej Rusi*, volume I, Warszawa, 1846, p. 44

²² Joannis Dlugossi, *Historiae Polonicae. Curaet impensis A.Przewdziejcki*, p. 245.

²³ *Kronika Polska Marcina Kromera, biskuba Warmińskiego*, p. 621

adds the part of the northern lands and the part of Bessarabia to the territory determined by his predecessor.

Other Polish chronicles of that time do not provide detailed information about the territory of Podillya land. Thus, M. Bielski in his *Chronicles* refers to Podillya land only in 1403, when, as he said, Vladislav gave to Švitrigaila all the Podillya country including Zhydachiv, Stryi, Shydliiv, Stebnytsa and Ustya.²⁴ Bielski mentioned only Kamyanets of all the cities in Podillya.²⁵ And the chronicler Mazovetski reports that Boleslaw III gave to Henry Sandomyrsk, Lublin and Podillya voivodeships.²⁶

Analyzing the above-mentioned sources, we can state that since the XIV century the historians do not provide information other than those recorded in the Lithuanian Chronicle. According to this source, „In the XIV century Podillya occupied the territory limited by the Dzhuryn River „*present Chortkiv district of the Ternopil region to the west or even up to the river Strypa*”.²⁷ The river Strypa as the boundary line is mentioned in the acts of the XV century, when Podillya land was already converted into a voivodeship and was divided into counties. „*From the south it was separated by the middle course of the Dniester, from the east of the city of Kalus the land border stretched across the river Murafa up to Bratslav and Sokolets along the Bug River in the north*”.²⁸

According to the data of this chronicle, the southeastern part of Ternopil County and Chortkiv County including the Transnistrian part belonged to the Western Podillya.²⁹ It should be noted that the southeastern territory of the modern West Podillya differs from its northwestern part with some stylistic features. In our opinion cultural and centripetal movement from the southeast towards Kamyanets and from the northwest towards Lviv played a dominant role in these processes.

Ancient manuscripts and chronicles do not provide information about the settlements that were in Podillya land at that time. They informed only about the cities with castle fortifications. „*Castles were of great interest to the chroniclers at that time because of their fortifications and means of*

²⁴ K. J. Turowski, *Kronika Marcina Bielskiego*, Z. 5-8 i dod. nadzwyczajny, bezplatn, Sanok, Naklad i druk Karola Pollaka, 1856, p. 383.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 383.

²⁶ A. Bielowski, *Pomniki dziejowe Polski (Monumenta Poloniae historica)*, Lwów, Nakl. Akad. Umiejetości w Krakowie, 1878, p. 203.

²⁷ River Strypa is a landmark limit defining the western part of Podillya in the XIV century.

²⁸ Ignacy Daniłowicz, *Latopisiec Litwy i Kronika ruska: Z rekopisu sławiańskiego przepisane*, p. 44.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 44.

defense against foreign enslavement and consolidation of Lithuanian influence in the state”.³⁰

At the end of the XIV and XV centuries historical sources recorded more settlements in Podillya lands. The medieval sources did not indicate the exact boundaries of Podillya land, but merely listed its main cities and that could be problematic for contemporary ethnologists.

The more or less exact Podillya boundaries from the west to the east were defined by Kazimierz Stadniski in the publication *„Bracia Władysława-Jagielly Olgierdowicza”*.³¹ Based on the sources of later time Stadnitsky considered the cities of Bratslav, Bar, Cherkasy, Chervonograd, Khmilnyk, Medzhybizh, Vinnytsia, Letychiv, Yazlovets, Buchach and Kamyanets to be the part of Podillya.³²

Podillya began to change its administrative boundaries due to military struggle of the ruling powers of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, and the cultural vector often turned to various metropolitan areas. But this did not prevent the later chroniclers, in the XVI-XVII centuries in particular, to credit Podillya with those areas that did not currently belong to it.

Podillya was politically consistent during the period of Lithuanian domination from the time of Gediminas to Švitrigaila „XIV-XV centuries”. It was an independent area among other Lithuanian administrative units, which were called the „principality” or „land” at that time. And this meant that the inhabitants of each „land” were considered to be a separate ethnic area with their respective laws and customs.

Podillya existed in such limits not for a long time. After continuous strife for the right to own this territory, the Poles and Lithuanians divided it into two parts. In 1432 Lithuanian prince Švitrigaila was forced to abandon the north-western part of Podillya and declared it in possession of Poland. In 1434 the Polish part was converted into a voivodeship consisting of three counties: Kamyanets, Letychiv and Chervonograd. *„In the north it bordered on Volyn province, in the west on Rus’ Voivodeship „Galician land” separated by the river Seret, in the south it was limited by the Dniester River, in the east-by the river Murafa, and then there was a land border, which included Bar, Lityn, Khmilnyk and Salnyky subregions”*.³³

³⁰ N. Molchanovsky, *Essay news about the Podolia land before 1434*, Kiev, Typography of Imperial University of St. Volodymyr, 1885, p. 13.

³¹ *Bracia Władysława-Jagielly Olgierdowicza, Króla Polski, Wielkiego Księcia Litwy Przez Kazimierza Stadnickiego*, Lwów, Z druk. Zakładu Narod. im. Ossolińskich, 1867, p. 121.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 122.

³³ *Encyklopedia powszechna z ilustracjami i mapami*, volume XIX, Kraków, p. 913.

The boundary between the Rus' and Podillya voivodeships in the south was by the Dniester, in the west it was by the river Strypa. To the south of Buchach the border turned to the east so that the villages of Pomirtsi, Polivtsi, and Cherkavshchyna belonged to the Podillya Voivodeship, and Tsvitova, Dzhuryn, Bilobozhnytsya and Chortkiv with Uhryn were in Rus' Voivodeship. Shvaykivtsi, Probyzhna, Zhabyntsi, Vasykivtsi, Trybukhyvtsi, Gusyatyń with Vilkhovchik belonged to Podillya while Hadynkivtsi, Teklivka, Kotsyubyntsy, Kregulets, Nizhybirok, Samolusky, Lychkivtsi belonged to the Rus' Voivodeship. From the east the border of Chervonograd povit „district” was marked by the Zbruch River, and in Sataniv area it deviated to the east.³⁴ As for the second southeastern part „Lithuanian”, it was transformed into Bratslav Province and was under the rule of Lithuania until the Union of Lublin „1569”. It also consisted of three counties-Bratslav, Vinnytsia and Zvenygorod. „*The boundaries of the Bratslav Province were the following: it bordered on Podilsk Voivodeship in the west and northwest, and on the Dniester River in the south separated from Moldova and the Kodyma River and the ancient Podillya virgin lands or Tatar steppes began after the Kodyma River, in the east the border was marked by the rivers the Vys' and Sinyukha and the Kiev province, in the north it bordered on Kiev and Podillya voivodeships*”.³⁵

The division of Podillya remained almost unchanged for three and a half centuries during all the time of Polish rule in our region „*short-term changes in the borders of Podillya and Bratslav voivodeships during the Turkish possession of Podillya in 1672-1699 had no influence on the further status quo of these voivodeships*”.

After the accession of the Polish provinces to the Russian Empire in 1795 Podillya and Bratslav voivodeships were transformed into the region, and then immediately into the governorship. In particular, the Podillya province consisted of 12 districts: Kamyanets, Ushytsya, Verbovets, Grudets, Zinkivtsi, Letychiv, Proskuriv, Starokostyantyniv, Basaliysk, Yampil, Kremenets and Dubno.³⁶

According to scientists Ya. Zhupansky, V. Krul, V. Jaman, at this time Podillya district „*...occupied the territory of the current Borschiv,*

³⁴ Ya. Pasternak, „West Podillya on tidy stories”, in *Zalishchyky land in memories of emigrants*, compiler and editor B. Melnychuk, Ternopil, publishing house „Ternopil”, 1993, p. 13.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 69.

³⁶ M. Symashkevych, *Historical-geographical and ethnographic essay of Podolia*, p. 9.

Zalishchyky, Chortkiv, southeastern part of Buchach and the southern part of the Gusyatyn district of the Ternopil region in the west".³⁷

Podillya province with 12 districts was re-established in 1796, and Kamyanets was made a central provincial city. It consisted of such counties as Kamyanets, Balta, Bratslav, Vinnytsia, Haysyn, Letychiv, Lityn, Mogylev, Teofipil, Proskuriv, Ushytsya and Yampil.³⁸ With the formation of the Podillya province, its western part as far as the river Zbruch was under Austria-Hungary and was included in the Galician Voivodeship where it was until 1939. From now on this land was completely under the Galician influence and is often referred to in the literature „scientific, artistic” Galician Podillya.³⁹

In the last quarter of the XIX century Podillya province bordered on Volyn province in the north, namely with its Starokonstyantyniv, Novgorod-Volynskiy and Zhytomyr districts, on the east-with Kiev province, in particular with Lypovetsk and Uman districts, in the southeast-with the Kherson province, Ovidiopol and Ananyiv counties, from the southwest-with Bessarabia and Galicia, which is separated by the Zbruch river.⁴⁰

In the second half of the nineteenth century Ya. Holovatsky noted in his work *Folk songs of Galician and Hungarian Rus* that Western Podillya in the west began from the Lypa River „probably Zolota Lypa” and stretched east to Kamyanets, which had long been called as Kamyanets-Podilskiy. At this time the territory consisted of Kamyanets, Ternopil, Chortkiv and a part of Berezhany „along the Zolota Lypa River”.⁴¹ A similar point of view on this issue is also supported by Ya. Pasternak in the article „Western Podillya in the beginnings of history”⁴² and G. Kupchanko in the work *Galicia and its Rus' inhabitants*.⁴³

³⁷ Ya. Zhupansky, V. Krul, V. Dzhaman, „On the issue of the boundaries of Podillya”, in *Problems of ethnography, folklore and social geography of Podillya. Scientific collection*, Kamyanets-Podilskiy, 1992, p. 125.

³⁸ M. Symashkevych, *Historical-geographical and ethnographic essay of Podolia*, p. 9.

³⁹ *Encyklopedia powszechna z ilustracjami i mapami*, pp. 420-421.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 420-421.

⁴¹ *Folk songs of Galician and Hungarian Rus' collected by Ya. Holovatsky*, part 1, Dumas and opinions, Moscow, Publication of the Imperial Society of Russian History and Antiquities at Moscow University, 1878, p. 383.

⁴² Ya. Pasternak, „Western Podillya in the beginnings of history”, in *Zalishchyky land in memories of emigrants*, compiler and editor B. Melnychuk, Ternopil, Publishing House „Ternopil”, 1993, p. 3.

⁴³ G. Kupchanko, *Galicia and its Rus' inhabitants*, Vienna, Publishing House Friedrich Jaspers, 1896, p. 52.

As we can see, from the last quarter of the XIX century the ethnographic area of Podillya in the status of the Podillya province occupied the smallest territory, in particular in the west. From that time until the formation of the USSR „1922” no territorial changes occurred in Podillya. In the same status we mean Podillya province, this territory remained up to 30-ies of the XX century. Vinnytsia region of the Ukrainian SSR was formed in 1932, and Kamyanets-Podilskyi region of the Ukrainian SSR was formed in 1937 „named *Khmelnyskyi region since 1954*”. In 1939 the western lands of Podillya were reunited with Soviet Ukraine, forming the Ternopil region.⁴⁴ As we see, the current administrative entity did not preserve the traditional name of „Podillya” therefore this ethnographic name was gradually disappearing from the folk memory in ethnographically remote places.

According to the Ukrainian ethnologist R. Kyrchiv, „*Opillya is an original western continuation of the Podillya ethnographic area, which was part of the Precarpathian region. This concept is more known from geography than from ethnography. It defines the territory of the north-western part of the Podillya plateau in the boundaries of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk and the central western outskirts of the Ternopil region*”.⁴⁵ As we see, he considered Opillya to be the western continuation of Podillya. Objects of everyday life, works of folk art, folklore, traditional crafts, calendar and family rituals being in their essence and in form more closely related to Podillya regions rather than to the neighboring ones Pokuttya, Boykivshchina, Hutsulshchyna etc., could prove this assumption. According to R. Kyrchiv the area covered the territory of the central Lviv region in the basins of the upper Bug and the left tributaries of the Dniester, adjacent areas of the western Ternopil region and the Ivano-Frankivsk region till the left bank of the Dniester area. In the southwestern part of Opillya it goes farther into the Transnistrian area of Zhydachiv and Sambir of Carpathian region „Pidgiryia), and in the west stretches to the Peremyshl-Yavoriv Nadsianyya, which by the nature of the traditional domestic culture are peculiar sub-regions of the Carpathian region.

Evgenia Krochak-Shevchuk, a native of the village Vychilky of the Monastyrsk District „*the territory of Podillya mentions in her memoirs that „those who come from the far woodless villages of Podillya are called polyany*

⁴⁴ A. P. Ponomariov, *Ukrainian ethnography: A course of lectures*, Kiev, Lybid, 1994, p. 133.

⁴⁵ R. F. Kyrchiv, „Ethnographic zoning of Ukraine”, in *Ethnography of Ukraine: Textbook*, editor S. Makarchuk, Lviv, Svit, p. 134.

„opolyany”.⁴⁶ The *Encyclopedia powszechna* noted that „*Opolyany inhabited the Western Podillya as far as the Strypa River and somewhere along the Seret River in the East*”.⁴⁷ In our opinion this statement is not true, because it is based on mapping by foreign historians who viewed the region according to the administrative division of Podillya Voivodeship, and not Podillya ethnographic area.

The inaccuracy of the definition of the territory of Podillya and Opillya in Eastern Galicia is mentioned in the collective work *The Slavic Collection. Edition 1*. It states the following: „*Ternopil, Opillya and Chortkiv Podillya were called the breadbasket of Austria, or the Austrian Podillya*”.⁴⁸

Ya. Holovatsky in his work *Folk songs of Galician and Hungarian Rus* also gives a misunderstanding of the term „Opillya” apparently, he was focused on previous work. He notes in particular: „*There is a woodless land called Opillya in the north of Podillya. It begins with the city of Kozova Ternopil region and covers the territory of Zbarazh up to Volochysk. This name was not legalized by the Polish authorities, but is very old and well-known in the Laurentian and Hypatian chronicles in the meaning of pole/field*”.⁴⁹ Undoubtedly, here Y. Holovatsky artificially used the reference to these two sources, because they mean „polyany/field people” located in completely another ethnographic area-in the central Dnieper territory.

The most accurate interpretation of the boundaries of the Western Podillya territory was given by the Galician ethnographer Grygoriy Kupchanko. In his work *Galicia and its Rus' inhabitants* published in Vienna in 1896 he noted: „*Podolyans live in the neighborhood with Hutsuls, and then to a greater extent on the plains or in the valleys north of the Prut River in Bukovyna and north of the Dniester River in Galicia in Chortkiv, Berezhany and other districts. The Podolyans also call themselves opolyans, polyans or polyanytsyas, that is, the inhabitants of the field*”.⁵⁰

An important factor for identifying the characteristic features of the Western Podillya region is the peculiarities in some customs and rituals, as well as their terminological specifics. In particular, before the beginning of the twentieth century in some localities in the region under

⁴⁶ E. Krochak-Shevchuk, „To the Vychilky is a road”, in *Monastyrська and environs in the memories of immigrants*, compiler and editor B. Melnychuk and V. Trakalo, Ternopil, Publishing House „Ternopil”, 1993, p. 42.

⁴⁷ *Encyklopedia powszechna z ilustracjami i mapami*, p. 422.

⁴⁸ „Carpathian Rus. Geographical, statistical and historical-ethnographic essays of Galicia, northeastern Hungary and Bukovyna”, in *Slavic collection. Edition 1*, Saint Petersburg, 1875, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁹ *Folk songs of Galician and Hungarian Rus' collected by Ya. Holovatsky*, p. 383.

⁵⁰ G. Kupchanko, *Galicia and its Rus' inhabitants*, p. 52.

study there was the custom of using the fun rituals at the funeral, which had been abandoned for long in the Eastern Podillya.

Also there were popular tales and songs about the Opryshky, that were not common in the Eastern Podillya territories, as well as a number of other specific characteristic features that give grounds for a specific regional identity of the territory.

The regional consciousness is another feature in the definition of the ethnographic boundary of the region we studied and it was almost completely lost, although in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was characteristic of many residents of Podillya land, and in particular, simple villagers. It is most preserved in the memoirs of emigrants when determining the location of their province.

Olena Kysilevska, the emigrant from the United States and the native of Monasteryisk district, noted in her memoirs: „*My native side is Monasteryisk, Buchach, Pidbaitsi, and Berezhany, where our whole family was from; it is the boundless Podillya*”.⁵¹ And Vasyl Shuya, who came from the village Olesha of the Monasteryisk district, noted: „*The village was different only because of a hilly terrain, which is inherent in our Podillya*”.⁵² At this time „*we mean in the first third of the twentieth century*” locals, in particular in Monasteryisk region were well aware of the boundary separating Podillya from Opillya. After all, „*the village of Zastavtsi is located on the right side of the Koropets River, which separates Podillya from Opillya*”.⁵³

In the border area with the southern Volyn region local residents of the villages Koshlyaky, Shelpaky, Sukhivtsi, Nove Selo, Gnylychki, Golotky, Lysychyntsi in the Pidvolochysk district of the Ternopil region identify themselves with the Podolyans on the ethnographic level. This is common to both the elderly and younger generation. Only in the village Koshlyaky of the Pidvolochysk district most locals call themselves Galicians. This peculiarity was emphasized by the local teacher Matsyo Vira born in 1946: „*We are the Galicians because we have belonged to Galicia for a long time*”.

In the village Kozivka in Kozova district of Ternopil region the ethnographic self-identity is a rare phenomenon. Despite the fact that the residents of the village, and especially the immigrants to the United States, called themselves “residents on the border between Podillya and

⁵¹ O. Kysilevska, „My native side”, in *Monasteryiska and environs in the memories of immigrants*, compiler and editor B. Melnychuk and V. Trakalo, Ternopil, Publishing House „Ternopil”, 1993, p. 18.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 23.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 24.

Opillya”, but according to their understanding, the villages lying closer to the city of Berezhany were already from Opillya.

Both elderly and younger villagers from Kozivka, especially teachers called themselves Galicians, although the term „Podolyans” is not totally unknown to them. After all, the students of the senior classes during the questioning „surely from the tip of the teachers enlisted themselves to the Podolyans”.

In the village Saranchuky and in the surrounding villages of Bozhykiv, Kotiv, Baznykivka in Berezhany district of the Ternopil region the locals use the ethnographic self-name „Galicians”. This name is equally widespread both among the adult population and among schoolchildren. This is especially noticeable among school youth, who, when questioned on the list of ethnographic names „Hutsuls”, „Lemks”, „Boiks”, „Podolyans” wrote „Galicians”, although the name „Podolyans” is familiar to them, but it has not recently been in use in the area.

There is no special ethnographic self-identity name for residents of Shybalyn, east of Berezhany. „We are Westerners”, said a local teacher Voloshyn Mariya born in 1959. The schoolchildren of the senior classes of the local school supported her as they did not check anything from the listed names because the name „Westerners” were not there.

The self-identity „Podolyans” is already rarely used in the southern part of the Pidvolochysk region. As G. Stronska, a teacher by profession from Kolodiyivka) born in 1948: „*In our locality the inhabitants do not call themselves as Podolyans anymore. They rather identify themselves with dwellers of Ternopil region or we are all Galicians*”. Although in the early twentieth century this area was universally called Podillya by the locals. This is stated by a well-known Ukrainian writer B. Lepky in his memoirs *The Tale of My Life*.⁵⁴

The residents of urban areas of Grymayliv in Gusyatyn district, about 20 km from Kolodiyivka, had the same opinion about ethnographic self-identity. Here locals would rather called themselves „Westerners”, or more prone to the name „Galicians” than to the name „Podolyans”.

In the village Horodnytsya of the same Gusyatyn district the name Podillya was more common than other identity names, although it is also now out of use though high school students identify themselves ethnographically as Podolyans. „*Their identity is primarily aimed at a teacher’s point of view, rather than their own awareness*”. And it’s no wonder as at the

⁵⁴ B. Lepky, *The Tale of My Life*, volume 2, Kiev, Dnipro, pp. 318-319.

beginning of the XIX century this land was subordinated to the Podillya province.⁵⁵

The self-name „Podolyans” is more characteristic of the southeastern regions of West Podillya, Borshchiv, Zalishchyky, Chortkiv, and eastern Buchach. Here locals were calling themselves Podolyans up to 40 years of the twentieth century as this territory was a part of the Podillya province until the 20’s of the XX century and the socio-cultural vector was constantly directed to its metropolitan center. The direct evidence of this is the functioning of some song variants in this territory, in particular ritual ones, which, by common features, are closer to the eastern Podillya archetype than to the Western Podillya.

As you can see, ethno-regional consciousness of the population in different regions of Western Podillya is ambiguous, and in recent years it is has been introspective. All this is the result of constant changes in the boundaries both political and administrative, which became the main reason for the destruction of ethnic foundations and the creation of innovative unifications.

Thus, taking into consideration all the above-mentioned facts, which are fundamental in determining the ethnographic region, we can draft the ethnographic map of the Western Podillya, which is defined by the following boundaries: from the south of the Old Ushytsia along the Dniester River the boundary extends to the mouth of the Vereshchytsia River and goes to the west along its course as far as Gorodok. In the north the boundary goes to Shchekotiv to the Bug River within the limits of Busk, Olesko, Plisnevsk up to the upper reaches of the Goryn River near the Old Oleksynets, Kolodno up to Shyly and Palchyntsi as far as the Zbruch River. The eastern part of the Western Podillya turns down along the Zbruch River and stretches towards Viytivtsi, Gorodok, Dunaivtsi to the Old Ushytsia.

⁵⁵ *History of cities and villages of the Ukrainian SSR. Ternopil region*, Editorial board: S. Nechay, V. Andreev, M. Glinsky etc., Kiev, The main edition of the Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1973, p. 207.