

УДК 81'271'286(=162.1)(477.43/.44)"19/20"
DOI: 10.18523/lcmp2522-9281.2020.6.92-114

Yuliya Domitrak

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6238-4618>

**THE SELF-IDENTIFICATION
AND LANGUAGE AWARENESS OF POLES
IN EASTERN PODOLIA:
SURVIVAL OR DECLINE OF “POLISHNESS”?
(based on the 20th–21st century materials
from Gródek Podolski) ¹**

The article deals with the main principal categories of Polish minority self-identification and some problems of religious and language awareness in Eastern Podolia. The analysis is based on recordings collected in Gródek Podolski and its neighbourhoods at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. The author of the paper analyzes what is the image of the identification being reflected in the statements of local Polish inhabitants, finds out what motivates the interviewees to define themselves as Poles, and describes the ways of eliminating the Polish population in Eastern Podolia by authorities, through indicating the main factors that hinder the Poles' self-identification. The paper concludes that the Catholic religion is an element integrating the national minority that enhances the Polish national identity and maintains the transmission of cultural traditions. The language as a bearer of the sense of identity influences a person's

¹ The speech was delivered at the Summer Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies entitled “Cultural Wars” held at the University of Zagreb (Croatia) on June 14th–16th, 2019. The present paper is a revised and extended version. Publikacja powstała przy wsparciu finansowym uzyskanym z Programu zintegrowanych działań na rzecz rozwoju Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego (ZIP), współfinansowanego ze środków Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego w ramach Programu Operacyjnego Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój 2014–2020, ścieżka 3.5.

self-presentation, becoming its integral component. Language awareness often coincides with the national and ethnic identity. Despite the harmful policy of Soviet authorities' against Poles and all their efforts to suppress religion, Polish culture and language, the Polish population has never stopped to consider themselves as a related part of the entire Polish nation by keeping national traditions, they were faithfully committed to the Catholic Church, tried to preserve their language and history for younger generations.

Keywords: Polish minority in Ukraine, Podolia region, Gródek Podolski, self-identification, religious identity, language awareness, Polish dialect.

Introduction

Polish population in Ukraine is generally scattered on the territory of Western and Central Ukraine ¹. At the beginning of the nineties, there were about one million Poles. According to various statistics, the number of Polish minority vary from 600 thousand to 1,5 million (Rieger, 2002, p. 11). It is difficult to determine the exact number Poles currently living in Ukraine due to the lack of recent census data ². Nowadays only single Polish families remain. However, there are also villages with large numbers of Poles, especially in Khmelnytsky and Zhytomyr oblast. Despite the reducing group of Poles in Ukraine, many still preserve and use their language even under the influence of other languages (such as Ukrainian and Russian). Sometimes they pass their home language, traditions and customs on the younger generation.

The long-term research concerning the Polish minority, Polish cultural and language heritage at the former Borderlands of Western Ukraine has been being conducted since the 80s of XX century, and continue today. The results of the investigation were published in numerous articles, monographs, collections of scientific paper ³, e. g., volumes *Studia nad polszczyzną kresową* (1982–2010), *Język polski dawnych Kresów Wschodnich* (1996–2012), *Język polski na Ukrainie w końcu XX wieku* (2002, 2007), series of publications *Polskie słownictwo kresowe* edited by J. Rieger (2004, 2007, 2015) etc. My paper complements this ongoing research.

¹ The territory of Central Ukraine differs from the Western one due to the lack of ethnic conflicts, therefore the Ukrainian-Polish relations there are slightly different, and national awareness is not related to hostility.

² It is not easy to define who should be considered a Pole in present-day Ukraine.

³ Cp. J. Rieger, I. Cechosz-Felczyk, E. Dzięgiel, R. Dzwonkowski, H. Krasowska, J. Kość, J. Rudnyckij, W. Paryl and others.

In the article, I will draw attention to the principal criteria of Poles' self-identification in Eastern Podolia ¹ mainly based on materials collected at the turn of 20th–21st century. I will concentrate on some problems of language awareness and religious identity in Eastern Podolia (to the east of river Zbruch), i.e. the territory that after the separation of Poland in the 18th century was occupied by Russia. On the Western Podolia some aspects of Poles' thinking were developed in the 19th and 20th century in a different way.

Theoretical background

As for the theoretical basis for my analysis, I directly refer to works of J. Rieger (1996, 2019) and H. Krasowska (2007, 2012). The authors highlighted some issues concerning the problems of Poles' identification in Western and South-Eastern Ukraine.

Historical, social and cultural background concerning Podolia region was presented by W. Welhorski (1959), O. Kolberg ² (1994), P. Wandycz (1994), Z. Skrok (2007), H. Stroński (2017). These works were especially helpful for showing the historical and sociolinguistic situation in Podolia beginning from the XVI century, and at the same time for better understanding of nowadays reality.

Different aspects of the Polish minority situation in Ukraine and the attitude of the Soviet authorities towards Poles as a „nation's worst enemies” from the historical perspective are under great interest nowadays. Many investigations based on archival normative documents and testimony are being conducted by Polish and Ukrainian scholars, such as R. Dzwonkowski (1993), N. Iwanow (2014, 2017), P. Madajczyk (2010), T. Sommer (2010, 2013), H. Stroński (1998), S. Bilokoń (2017), W. Maslak (2016, 2018), D. Wasylenko (2017) and others ³.

¹ Podolia or *Podilia* (Ukrainian Поділля, Polish *Podole*) is a historic region located in the west-central and southwestern parts of Ukraine. The term is derived from Old Slavic *po* meaning 'by/next to/along', and *dol* 'valley'.

² O. Kolberg collected geographic, historical and ethnographic materials during thirty years. K. Wolski and D. Pawlakowa presented introductory remarks about history of Podolia.

³ Cp. R. Dzwonkowski, *Za wschodnią granicą 1917–1993: o Polakach i Kościołe w dawnym ZSRR*, Warszawa 1993; N. Iwanow, *Zginęli, bo byli Polakami: koszmar “operacji polskiej” NKWD 1937–1938*, Poznań 2017; P. Madajczyk, *Czystki etniczne i klasowe w Europie XX wieku. Szkice do problemu*, Warszawa 2010; T. Sommer, *Operacja antypolska NKWD 1937–1938*, Warszawa 2014.; С. Білоконь, *Масовий терор як засіб державного управління в СРСР 1917–1941*, Київ 2017; Д. П. Василенко, В. И. Маслак, Ж. М. Осикович и др. «Польская операция» в Полтавской области в 30-х годах XX века, Днипро 2017.

Among the borderlands of the First Polish Republic, Podolia was the richest region in terms of ethnicity and relating to customs, and the fate of its inhabitants was the most tragic (Skrok, 2007, p. 10). In my paper, I will raise some questions concerning the ways of eliminating the Polish population in Eastern Podolia by authorities, through indicating the main factors that hinder Poles' self-identification. Certainly, this research issue demands more profound study.

Methodology and materials

The research purpose and objectives of the article are as follows: 1) to analyse, what is the image of the identification being reflected in the statements of local Polish inhabitants of the city Gródek and its neighborhoods¹ in Podolia region; 2) to find out, what motivates the interviewees to define themselves as Poles and what factors obstruct the Poles' self-identification; 3) to detect the significance of religion and the Polish language awareness. I am particularly interested in the declared attitudes of informants towards individual elements of identifying "polishness", their individual perception.

The bases for my analysis are recordings made in Gródek Podolski² and its surroundings at the turn of the 20th and 21st century (about 25 hours). Janusz Rieger and his team collected the materials principally from the oldest generation in 1990–2003. I also use the most recent recordings received from the middle-aged generation that I made in 2010–2011. The value of older recordings lies in asking people who themselves witnessed the events taking place in the first half of the 20th century, and today meeting with such people could be uncommon. As an example, I will cite the original informants' statements in a Polish dialect (the abbreviation after each statement includes initials of name and surname, and the year of informant's birth³). What is not obvious in the English translation is the influence of Ukrainian phonetics (pronunciation,

¹ Including small villages that now belong to the city Gródek.

² Gródek (Ukrainian *Городок*) – a city in Khmelnytska oblast on the Smotrych river (about 60 km north from Kamieniec Podolski). In 2009, it had approximately 17 000 residents. *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich* states that Gródek was a city with 7 500 inhabitants (including 2 500 Jews, the rest were Catholics, the so-called "Mazury" former colonists from the San and Vistula). Gródek was founded in 1362 as a settlement, and has been a city since 1957. The Tatars destroyed it in 1550. Later it was ruled by the Herburts and Swierczowie, then it belonged to the Zamojski family, the 1st vote of Radziwiłł, Deville; in the years 1830–40 it was sold to the general Baron Gejsmar, later to the head of the Kiev bank Winogrodzki (SGKP, 1881, p. 818–819).

³ If this information is unknown, it is marked as NN1, NN2 etc.

word stress) and vocabulary, due to a constant language contact that leads to interference

The subject field of my study is not occasional. There are several reasons why I am interested in this area. Firstly, great number of Poles living there, including the descendants of the nobility ¹ who are considered “a keystone of polishness”. At the end of the 19th century, the general number of Poles-Catholics in Podolia was nearly 263 thousands (Welhorski, 1959, p. 87–88). According to the statistics from 1932, the Gródek region of Podolia was inhabited by the largest number of Poles – 18,4 % of all population (Стронський, 2017, p. 101). Even nowadays, the great number of Poles are living there that is often underlined by informants:

Przed wojną najwięcej było tu Polaków i Żydów w Gródku, Ukraińców mniej było WM19 – ‘Before the war, there were many Poles and Jews in Gródek, Ukrainians were less’; [A tutaj na Marchliówce żyją Polacy?] Poliaci tak wiele wiele Poliaków je, wże ta wulica też wsi Poliaci, i tam dal’sze przez jedne chaty Ukraińiec, a to wsio Poliacy AK17 – ‘[Are there any Poles living in Marchlowka?] So many Poles are living here, on this side street everyone is a Pole, and there through one house is a Ukrainian’; [Dużo tu jeszcze są Polaków?] Oj dużo, Gródek to nazywali, że to jest druga Warszawa tak mówili, żartowali. No w ogóle to w Gródku jest dużo Poliaków, tak żeby samo wziąć, jak niewymieszane już IS67 – ‘[Are there any Poles living here?] Oh, many; they called Gródek second Warsaw, in such way they were talking, joking. Well, in general, there are many Poles in Gródek, just to take only unmixed families’.

Secondly, Gródek is regarded as a cultural and religious center of Eastern Podolia. In the informant’s opinion it is one of the largest parish of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, e.g. *Tut więcej Poliaków, nu zmieszanych Poliaków, więcej, bo tutaj w Gródku to same większa parafia na Ukrainie EN37 – ‘Here there are more Poles, but more mixed families, because in Gródek there is the largest parish in Ukraine’*. Moreover, there is the Higher Theological Seminary of the Holy Spirit, which history goes back to the XVI century;

¹ In the 18th–19th century, nobility was very numerous particularly in Podolia, where it constituted 2/3 of the entire noble class in Ukraine. In the western provinces the nobility (called *szlachta zagonowa, zagrodowa, cząstkowa, bezrolna*) was a central cohesive source of support and stability, a proud and rebellious element, accustomed to the borderland life (Skrok, 2007, p. 99; Kolberg, 1994, p. VII–VIII). *Słownik geograficzny* reports that the number of nobility in Eastern Podolia, decreased from about 93 thousands in 1822 to about 22,6 thousands in the second half of the 19th century (SGPK, 1881, p. 442–443). In the 21st century during the field research we found the descendants of nobility; in some villages of Eastern Podolia (e.g. Zielona, Kupin, Czerowne, Hajdajki) in the the consciousness of Poles there is still division into *Mazury* and *Lachy*.

in 1991 it was renewed and headed by pastor Jan Olszański¹. Nowadays it is not only the institution where hundreds of future priests are studied, but also a center that unites the Polish community, and place, where different activities are being organized². Besides, Poles living in neighboring villages came to Catholic Churches in Gródek³, when other churches and chapels in Eastern Podolia had been destroyed during the Soviet totalitarian regime, and for a long period, it was difficult to get permission for renewing or building churches in small villages.

Thirdly, observation of the situation during the field research and analyzing the materials from Eastern Podolia allow to state the high consciousness of Poles' identification, good level of preserving the Polish language and traditions (even in mixed families). In the mind of local Poles, Gródek Podolski considered as "small Warsaw" or "second Warsaw", i.e. their local homeland, to which they are firmly attached, because it is the land of their ancestors and the land of the Polish nation.

Kiedys Gródek u nas był samo polski (...) bardzo mało Ukraińców, mało. I do te pory nazywajo to mała Warszawa GX11 – 'Once Gródek was only Polish (...) there were few Ukrainians. We call it small Warsaw untill nowadays'; Gródek nasza malienka Warszawa, temu że u nas fajny kościół i fajny taki koliedź tam uczą ksiądzów (...) mnie tam przyjemno duże przyjechać do swoji Polšzy malienkie Warszawy, żeby tut wmierać HS35 – 'Gródek is our small Warsaw, because we have nice Roman Catholic Church and college, where priests are studied. It is so pleasant to come back to my Poland, small Warsaw, to die here'.

Analyzing the materials, I used some research methods, mainly: open biographical interview method, empirical data analysis, method of description single cases and sociolinguistic approach, showing the current situation against the background of historical and social conditions.

The principal categories of Poles' self-identification and language awareness

The main criterion of belonging to a particular nation is first of all – self-identification of a person. Identification is considered as the phase in the

¹ The history of Theological Seminary was presented by Serhij Lenczuk: <http://wds-gorodok.com/2013/01/19/istoriia-seminarii/> (13.01.2013).

² Including support for old people, young families and children (the House of Mercy, family circles, rosary groups, The Congregation of the Immaculate Sisters of the Holy Spirit and library are functioning there).

³ Mostly to baptize children, to make confession, to take a church wedding, to participate in ceremony of confirmation or festive liturgies etc.

development of identity¹, conditions and mechanism of its formation, in other words the process through which the individual defines himself, his own identity². At the forefront comes two basic criteria: their own declaration (those who consider themselves Poles) and ethnic criteria (having Polish ancestors). There are also cases of changing identities or having more than one (often in mixed multi-ethnic families). After an analysis of collected materials, several categories of Poles' self-identification in Gródek Podolski can be singled out.

- **Identification based on blood ties** – because of blood ties to ancestors, parents and grandparents, because of being aware of their Polish roots.

Most often the connection with “polishness” is confirmed in it is biological origin (the law of blood *ius sanguinis*). They are strongly convinced that one can feel a Pole when he/she has been born in a Polish family. They declare their Polish origin in many generations. Most of the respondents declaring their Polish origin stated that their parents (also grandparents) were Poles; some of the middle-aged informants were born in mixed families.

Ji tato Poliak, mama Poliaczka, i did, baba AK17 – ‘Her father is a Pole, her mother is a Pole, grandfather and grandmother too’; Doki ja zapamiętała, to dziady nasze byli Poliaki i pradziady Poliaki FŚ25 – ‘As far as I can remember, our grandparents and great grandparents were Poles’; My jesteśmy Poliaki takie z korzenia LG32 – ‘We are Poles by roots’; No wu mnie i mąż Poliak i ja Poliak tom'u i wsi dzieci puchodzo z Polsky, nu wże wielie wielie wielie pukuli'eń, że my wsio polskie JC49 – ‘My husband is a Pole, I am too, and all my children are Poles, we are all Polish people in many generations’; Była toże Poliaczka mama z domu, tak u nas z pokolenia w pokolenie Poliaki tak u nas, i tata i wsi wsi my WN53 – ‘My mother was a Pole, everyone in our family is a Pole from generation to generation, and my father and everyone’.

Currently, the biological and ethnic continuum is still an attribute for some Poles; there is an increasing tendency for mixed Polish–Ukrainian families, who often try to keep both the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, and speak Ukrainian as well as Polish.

- **Identification through the documented Polish nationality** – because of possessing any documents that can prove Polish descent.

According to informants, an official annotation confirming their Polish nationality plays a very important role. The interviewees declared their Polish

¹ According to E. H. Erikson (1956) notions “identity” and “identification” should be differentiated; they have common roots, however, the phenomena they denote are various stages of the process of developing “ego”.

² The definition of T. Eliot in the sociological vocabulary H.P. Fairchilda (cited: Synak, 1998, p. 41).

origin by stating that they have a passport, birth-certificate or other documents (e. g. military identity card) where they were documented as Poles.

Piszto sie Poliak (...) nu Polak, w paszporcie Poliak AK17 – ‘They are documented as Poles (...) so I am a Pole, in the passport a Pole’; Mój ojciec, chociaż takie nazwisko, alie Poliak zapisany jeszcze z pradziadka, i nie było nijakich problemów NN1 – ‘My father, though he has such a surname, but is documented as a Pole from a great grandfather, and there were not any problems’; [A skąd Pani język polski zna?] Nu my ż Poliak, my tak do dzisiaj piszem sie w dokumentach ze wszystkim Poliak, ojciec Poliak, matka polska Poliaczka i my Poliak. I tak ja w pasporci Poliaczka, i tut ni ma odkazu ni WM22 – ‘Well, we are Poles that is written in documents, my father is a Pole, my mother is a Pole and we are Poles. And I am a Pole in my passport, and it could not be denied’.

Recollections of people from Ukraine behind the river Zbruch, who applied for passports after the Second World War to have the entry “Pole”, indicate that the authorities were definitely striving to put down Ukrainian nationality, because such an entry may be one of the elements of choosing a nationality¹. Sometimes the parents wanted to hide their origin, so they initiated themselves a record of a nationality other than Polish. Reasons for this were various: saving their family from deportation, ensuring the good situation for their child at school and giving them a chance to get an education, trying to find a better job, improving relations with the local inhabitants. This was mainly due to the social and historical conditions. After the Second World War, not only names and surnames of the Poles were distorted, but their nationality was regularly changed without their consent (often under the threat or pressure). People were forced and pressed to except Ukrainian nationality. Some agreed and other stood their way, proved or fought for Polish nationality (even burned their passports with other then Polish nationality). The authorities not only refused to entry of the Polish nationality, but the Poles were threatened by deportation and repression.

Trzydzieści siódmym roku to nictu nikogo nie pytal tego, że u mnie jes niby synowa z wioski no to ja pytal jej babci, matki pytal, ojca jej pytal, czego wsi ponapisywane my pozapisywane Polaki, tu pozapisywane Ukraińcy je, że my Poliacy jesteś BM22 – ‘In 1937, none asked about origin. I have a daughter-in-law in the village, so I asked her grandmother, mother and father why we are documented as Poles in passport, and here we documented as Ukrainians, but we are Poles’; Nu jak pasport, Polka wże w stronu, Ukrajinka trza pisać. Jaka ty Poliaczka! Krzyczy, nie piszcie ty jaka! W nas dužo je Poliak, że ma pasport Ukrainka nie Polka. A ja taki mam i metryka Polka i pasport Polka, ja Polka WK23 – ‘He told we should write

¹ Similar situation occurred in Belarus.

a Ukrainian in passport. He shouted: you are not a Pole! There are many Poles here, who had been documented as Ukrainians in their passports. But I have both birth certificate and passport with Polish nationality, I am a Pole'; Ja jestem Poliak, moja żona też Poliaczka, a mojej żony brat Ukrainiec. Jak można być Ukraińcem, kiedy ojciec Poliak i matka Poliak, babusia Poliaczka, dziadusio Poliak, i tak idzie to ja nie wiem do jakiego pokolenia tam. On kiedyś tam gdzieś tam robił i popadł w więzienia i jemu mówili tam w więzieniu, że jagżesz ty będziesz Poliakiem ty będziesz siedział do skończenia swoich lat w więzieniu, jak że ty będziesz Ukraińcem ty już nie bandzior. Ty przyjmij sobie Ukrainiec, nie pisz sobie w paszporcie nacjonalność tam jes Poliak, napisz Ukrainiec. U niego korzenie polskie, ale jemu kazali nie tylko w więzieniu kazali, a ji w milici, kiedy mu przyszło paszport dostać, napisz sie Ukrainiec, musiał napisać Ukrainiec BUK50 – 'I am a Pole, my wife is a Pole, and my wife's brother is a Ukrainian. How could one be Ukrainian if his parents, grandparents and other older generations are Poles? My wife's brother was in prison and he was told: If you were a Pole, you would be sitting in prison until the end of your days. He was considered a Polish bandit (...) He is a Pole by origin; when he got his passport, but was told in prison and at the militia he had to write a Ukrainian'.

The ignorance of Polish culture and history, growing children in different (not native) culture, lack of language skills ¹, as well as documented “Ukrainian” nationality in passport favor the ethnic assimilation. In a new passport, the Ukrainian authorities omitted the column “nationality”, which leads to integration by the general awareness of the mixed population. However, in respondents’ mind, a passport still defines a person’s nationality that is considered very important.

At the same time, we could observe affection to the area of residence that means that people declare themselves as local Poles, Poles from Ukraine or Gródek:

Tam Poliaki z Polski to byli osobnie o, a takie my tajak z Ukrainy (...) nu to my takie byli Poliaki stąd TS26 – 'Over there Poles are from Poland, they are separately, and such as we are from Ukraine (...) so, we are Poles from here'; My Poliaki, my miesne Poliaki, u nas tu wszyscy polski język znają FS25 – 'We are Poles, we are local Poles, and we all know the Polish language'; My mówili, że my miesne. To ojciec tam w Smotryczu żył koło Kamieńca Podolskiego, a matka gródecka. Poliaki tutaj byli WM22 – 'We said we were local. My father lived in Smotrych near Kamieniec Podolski, and my mother was from Gródek. The Poles lives here'. Ta pamięć trzyma nas na ziemi i ta pamięć nas wola do naszej malieńkiej Warszawy Gródek HS35 – 'Our memory connects us with this land and calls us to our small Warsaw that is Gródek'.

¹ Two-thirds of Poles in Ukraine do not know Polish language.

● **Identification through belonging to the Church** – because of being a Catholic.

In the borderland area, Catholicism was historically associated with “polishness”. It is a generally accepted rule: Catholics are Poles and Orthodox – “Ruthenians”.

Nu ja wim, ja jak by skazać pu polsky niby gordżuś swojom wiarom, swojom polskom, że ja jestem katolikiem na dzisiejszy dzień. Tak, tak katolik to Poliak JC49 – ‘I want to say, that I am proud of my Polish faith, that I am a Catholic until present days. Yes, certainly a Pole is a Catholic’.

According to official church sources, there are at present over half a million Roman Catholics in the Ukraine, most of them consider themselves as Poles (Dzwonkowski and others, 2000, p. 221). Being a Catholic can mean identification by inheritance (being a member of Catholic family from ages), from upbringing (religious practices) or by choice. The Catholic religion is very important criterion for self-determination of most respondents. Often the answer for the question concerning their nationality was declaration “I am a Catholic”. The Roman Catholic Church played an important social and cultural role in the lives of Poles, especially on the Borderlands. Besides, it helps to preserve the Polish language in the subject region (together with the Polish school).

Jesteśmy katolikami, to modlijcie sie po polski, to trzeba, jesteśmy Polakami TS26 – ‘We are Catholics, we pray in Polish that is why we are Poles’; [Co jest najważniejsze, żeby tutaj się polskiego nauczyć?] Nu tak kościół kościół, wo córeczka do szkoły chodzi, a tak kościół (...) Nu czego my Poliaki my powinny swego sie trzymać WN53 – ‘[What is the most important thing to learn Polish here?] Well, the Catholic Church, the church, and my daughter also goes to school (...) we are Poles and should stick to our principles’; Kościół mnie zdaje sie to też bardzo jest taki najważniejszy w tym takim jakimś rol gra wot, bo w kościele i msza i kazanie (...) wtedy to po polsku spowiadali sie, dlatego starali wszyscy wiedzieć ten polski język, zachować jego po prostu MS59 – ‘To my mind the Catholic Church plays an important role, because liturgy and homily was in Polish, earlier people made their confession in Polish, that is why we try to know the Polish language’.

In some regions, religious identity is even more important than national or language identity. Grzegorz Babiński, in his work about the Polish-Ukrainian borderland, indicates that national identity is very often determined directly from religious identity (Babiński, 1997, p. 120). Often people who have “ukrainised” in regards to language and culture (e.g. influence of the younger generation or mixed marriages), do not lose their Polish identity because they

belong to the Roman Catholic Church, e.g. *My wiemy my katoliki, my nie czysto Polaki. [My] rymokatoliki NN2 – ‘We know we are Catholics, we are not hundred percent Polish; we are Roman Catholic’*. Self-identification in many cases can be connected with the confession or with a parish of the Catholic Church¹.

During the Second World War, many churches were burnt and demolished; priests were persecuted, imprisoned, deported and mistreated. After the war, the churches were turned into storehouses, granaries, concert halls, etc. Religious education and preparation for the sacraments were conducted secretly. Poles prayed at home, in chapels, “quietly” participated in religious life. Some of them were afraid to go to church, pray and celebrate holidays; others were forced to work in holidays. Mostly informants declared piety and prayerfulness in their families, and their children went to the church regardless of the school administration prohibitions. The Soviet authorities tried to weaken the religious awareness of Poles, especially children and adolescents who were intimidated and punished at school, and sometimes mistreated for violating the requirements of the school administration. The teachers being “stubborn communists” made sure that the children did not go to church, especially during the holidays (teachers even checked whether the children had eaten kutia if they see poppy seeds).

Oj za Sawieta bali sie wsio, nawit’ i różaniec trze było po cichu mówić chto, wszystko jedno jak chtoś umar to różaniec sprawiali za jego dusze, to trze było cichsze (...) to chodzili do kościoła to tam uczyteli na drogach stawali, przyzrali, nie puskali, potemu w szkoli tam wsio było na nich wyhowor jim dawali, alie nasze dzieci iszli i nie bali sie.... Sze co tam, nawet dzieciom w zęby zagliądali czy kutie jedli czy świętkuje święta czy mak jedli [w których to latach?] nu cały czas od kiedy sowiecka właść była tut FŚ25. Religia była prześladowana w szkolie HG52. Ja jim ten list przeczytałem i przetłumaczyłem jim na polski mowi, co tam ciocia ta jim pisała. A na drugi dzień mnie w NKWD wyzwali, „szo wy tam na jakijś mowi, wy tam szoś tam wczytę i tak dalsze”, to bardzo strogo, bo zaraz ktoś donosił WM19

Despite all this, Poles from Gródek region showed their firmness and declared strong Catholic faith. People were greatly supported by priests who defended the Roman-Catholic Church and all members of this community. Informants often underlines the tight relations between clergy and local Poles, manifesting their active participation in religious life and withstanding the struggle with the state authorities.

¹ Sometimes the identification with the minority is based on the mere fact of having been baptized in the Catholic Church.

Kościół katolicki przetrwał dzięki komu, dzięki Poliakom, Poliacy zachowały wiare HK68 – ‘The Roman Catholic Church survive thanks to Poles, Poles preserved their faith’; Tu zawsze było księży, zawsze i tak stała wiara była u nas taka, stalię do swojej wiary wszystkie ludzie. Jak było jakieś coś tam gdzieś coś powiedzieli na księdza, to wszystkie ludzi iszli i tak odstajowali swego księdza, takie było (...) Bo u nas był taki ksiądz, taki ksiądz był, że jakoś tak zawsze obstawał te prawa, i modlił sie, i pokutował i nawet na kamieniach płakał było widno za wszystko, tak wymodlił te wiare i obronił ten swój kościół HG52 – ‘We always have priests and constant faith; all people have stood by their faith. If someone said something bad on a priest, everyone uphold and defended the priest (...) We had a priest, who always prayed, suffers and even wept on the stones, so he prayed for this faith and he defended his church’.

• **Identification with the Polish nation and culture** as a kind of emotional affection towards “polishness” – because of feeling oneself to be a part of Polish nation, because of preserving Polish traditions and celebrating Polish holidays.

Identification can be proclaimed through the so-called ‘declaration of will’. Besides, Polish traditions are still cultivated in families, also thanks to the activities of Polish diaspora organizations.

Ja czuje si Polko, tak. Niech mnie co chto mówi to ja swego trzymam si GO36 – ‘I feel I am a Pole. No matter what people say, but I am keeping my own’; Te polskie tradycje to my staramy sie podtrzymywać i przekazać swoim dzieciom i wnukom, żeby pamiętali jak to było dawniej TS26 – ‘We try to support our Polish traditions and pass them on to our children and grandchildren, so that they remember how it was in the past’.

A retrospective mechanism plays a significant role in defining of the image of one’s own identity that consists in referring to the past of the native ethnic group. The connection with other Poles is expressed by sharing mutual fate in the past (also common ancestors expressed in words “my nation, my blood”) and in active battles for the Roman Catholic Church and priests, in efforts to build chapels and churches, as well as in demonstrating their strong patriotic feelings.

Some interviewees indicated an emotional connection with Poland. In numerous statements, people expressed regret that for various reasons they had not left to Poland. Very often local authorities (including the administration of the kolkhoz) put some obstacles for them by refusing for leaving or destruction some papers.

● **Identification through language** as a value of “polishness” – because Polish is regarded as the native language.

In a situation of the cultural interpenetration, a language is the basic distinguishing feature of a minority group among other communities. A language holds an important place among other determinants of identity, especially in “small” communities of Slavic languages and national minorities living in the foreign surroundings, e.g. Lemkos in Poland, Poles in Ukraine and Lithuania, Ruthenians in Slovakia. Keeping the core of their own language is a precondition for maintaining the continuity of their cultures.

Certainly, the most important and universally recognized factor constituting the identity of communities and individuals is the Polish language. This can be confirmed in the statements of some informants who are proud that they know the Polish language and try not to forget it.

Ja wim pol'skyj jenzyk to mi nie misza (...) alie ja rada, że ja wumim pu polsky gadać, że ja rozumim pu polsky i ja tym ciesze sie JC49 – ‘I know Polish language (...) I am proud that I can speak Polish, I am glad that I understand Polish’; *Alie swojej mowy [polskiej] nie zapominamy nigdy* LCh46 – ‘However, my own Polish language I will never forget’.

Theses “Polish is the one who speaks Polish” or “Polish was spoken in Polish families” declared older respondents (often having noble origin).

A tu wszystkie my Poliaki po polskie rozmawiajo BM22 – ‘We are all Poles here, because we speak Polish’; *A my tak u nas tak dużo mówio, sąsiedy nasze gródeckie to wsi po pol'ski rozmawiajo (...) jaki on pol'ski język onż mieszany* FŚ25 – ‘Here we speak in Polish; our neighbors in Gródek speak Polish, but mixed language’; *A wdoma to wu nas nie było ukrajińskiego języka, tylko wsio po pol'sky* TS26 – ‘At home, we speak only Polish; we did not know Ukrainian’.

There were also those who spoke other languages besides Polish (there are Ukrainian and Russian), but felt like Polish. One of the informants underlines that the way not to forget the language is to think in Polish.

Uczyła nas polskiego języku ciocia, siostra naszego ojca. A jej jeszcze babcia u nas była taka, z wielkich panów, ona umiała osiem języków. Ale że już dawno bez polskiego języku i zapominam o tym, a ona [ciocia] mówi, że nie zapomnisz jak benziesz myśleć po pol'sku, bo ja zawsze myślię po polsku i nie zapominam GX34 – ‘Our aunt, our father’s sister taught us the Polish language. Moreover, her grandmother came from rich landowners’ family, and she knew eight languages. It has been a long time since I use Polish and I forget a lot. However, my aunt says that you will not forget if you think in Polish, because I always think in Polish and I do not forget it’.

It is also necessary to take into consideration the problem of national bilingualism (or multilingualism). With that as background, my research questions are: 1) what are the functions of the Polish language, particularly in the opposition „home language” ~ „public language”, 2) what languages – Polish, Ukrainian, Russian – do respondents choose in various situations, 3) are there any boundaries between languages and 4) how do different languages influence the awareness of their users.

Review of the related literature shows that the relationship between language and identity on a cultural and linguistic border can be often uncertain and indistinct¹. Iwona Kabzińska considers that the Polish language has lesser importance in ethnic identification. Her research among ‘church Poles’ in Belarus proves that it is not always treated as ‘generic value’, i.e. those factors which are perceived by members of a given community as a directly connected with their group identity, as crucial in differentiating their culture from other cultures. In the surveyed community, some of the interviewees, especially from the older generation, but also some younger ones, were of the opinion that a Pole should know the Polish language, but others did not think it is necessary. The middle-aged subjects were not fluent in Polish or did not know this language at all, but still wanted to be counted as members of the Polish-Catholic minority. For several years, various forms of Polish education have been increased. Such developments enhance the influence of the language on the process of individual’s identification with the Polish minority (Kabzińska, 1999).

Language awareness is considered first as an understanding that the regional variant of language correlate with the standard language. It is also understood as “a metacognitive skill, which is manifested by the ability of reflection about language as the system of abstract rules (on different levels of its organization) as well as language performance of an individual or other group, community and nation” (Cygan, 2011, p. 431). Language reflection can be manifested in formulating comments or opinions about language, language self-correction, awareness of historical variability of language, etc. The degree of language awareness depends on inborn factors and on knowledge acquired by education, observation, and life experience. In my research, some people

¹ The issue concerning the language as an indicator of identity on the borders was the subject matter of many Polish scholars, e.g. Z. Greń, R. Dzwonkowski, A. Engelking, I. Kabzińska, H. Karaś, H. Krasowska, J. Rieger, E. Smułkowa, J. Straczuk, A. Stelmaczzonek-Bartnik, B. Synak, A. Zielińska etc.

realize that despite certain discrepancies, “mangling” and “mixing up” with Ukrainian and Russian, they do not speak “pure Polish”. Others probably repeat suggestions imposed by the hostile environment: “you are not Polish, because you do not speak Polish, the Polish language sounds different” (Rieger, 2002, 24–25). Some are confused and cannot determine the character of their language. Compare the following statements:

Mowa gródecka taka, ży moży chtoś pojmie, chtoś nie pojmie naszê słowo, ъu nas słowo wymieszane. Tut Ukrajina, tut jeszcze takie jenzyki. Kiedyś u nas była „parasolia”, a zaraz już „zontik”. Przejszli my na ruski, ъot i tak podchycili (...) I tak wymieszane u nas jenzyki EK13 – ‘Language in Gródek is mixed up; maybe someone is able to understand or cannot understand our words. We live in Ukraine where there are other languages. We changed the language and start speaking Russian, e.g. earlier we use word “parasolia”, and now “zontik” [umbrella] (...) We have a mixture of languages’; [Jak mówią teraz pod kościołem?] Wiency po ukraiński, po siolski, po chachłacki GX11 – ‘[In what way people speak near the Catholic Church?] They speak more in Ukrainian, like in village, mixed Russian-Ukrainian dialect’; Choć jak to my rozmawiali, alie niby po swojemu po polski, nie taki czystyj język TS26 – ‘We talked in our own way in Polish, but it was not such a pure language’; To my wiency by batakali do polski mowy. Skiko liat i mowa nie wychodzi z siola, z pokolienia, da z pokolienia. Choć ona nie taka jak trza, nieczysto polska, no wsio taki swoja, ot postojano tut sie trzyma OX45 – ‘We speak much more closely to the Polish language. How many years passed and our language remains in the village from one generation to another. Although, the language is not as it should be, not clearly Polish, but still ours and it is keeping here constantly’; [A jak tu rozmawiają?] Czysty polski język to nie, nasz zupełnie inaczy. Tu wszystko zmieszane, wywrócone. Język rodny u nas polski w domu, ale to już taki polski, jak my na Ukrainie. Tak u nas w Gródku my nie mówimy, że to polski język, my mówimy, że to gródecki język. Przyjeżdżajo księża z nami rozmawjajo, jak po teliewizji czy po radio, ładnie po polski, ładny bardzo język, a my taki nie rozmawiamy. Coś my musimy zrobić, my ni możemy rozmawjać jak Poliaki. Jak on podobny? Śmieś i bjeloruski i ruski i polski i ukrajinski, to on taki, ot wszystko tam też śmieś jes taka ukrajinska NN1 – ‘[How do you speak here?] It is not clear Polish language, ours is quite different. Here everything is mixed, turned around. Our native language that we speak at home is Polish, but it is so-so Polish as we live in Ukraine. We do not say it is Polish, we say that it is Gródek language. The priests come here and speak very nicely, like in television or radio, but we do not speak in such a way. What can we do, we cannot speak like Poles? It is like a mixture of Russian, Polish and Ukrainian’; Ali chto chce u nas po polsku rozmawiać tam i rozmawia. Ja wyjde na ulice, ja nie może mówić: „idy sjudy”, ja mówie: „choć tutaj”. I przychodzi ukrajinski sąsiad do mnie, ja sobie rozmawjam po polsku: „ot ty siadaj, ty rób, ty to” (...) Z mężem po polsku. Ja sie nie bojem, my nie

majem czego bać się, a przód bali się, przód chowali się i bali się. Jeszcze, kiedy ja chodziła do szkoły, to już było czterdziesty ósmy, dziewięty, pięćdziesiąty rok, my z koleżankami zawsze jak przemianka od lekcji do lekcji, przerwa jest, my wychodzimy na przerwie taj my po polsku rozmawiali. My nie patrzyli, że tam Ukrajnicy jest dziewczenta, i oni nic NN3 – ‘Who wants to speak Polish he/she speaks. I speak in Polish „come here” not in Ukrainian. Even when the Ukrainian neighbor comes to me, I speak Polish (...) I speak Polish with my husband too. I am not afraid, we do not need to be afraid now; but earlier [during the Soviet regime] we were hidden and frightened. When I attended school in 1948–1950, I was always speaking Polish with my friends during the breaks. We did not pay attention that there were Ukrainian girls, and they did nothing’.

Furthermore, Polish schools also played a significant role for today’s language awareness of Poles in Podolia. Currently, the process of revitalizing the Polish language is noticeable in Podolia (e.g. Polish schools are functioning in Kamieniec Podolski, Gródek, Winnica). Children and young people show great interest in learning the Polish language, they attend Polish schools, courses or facultative classes. According to the research, both the elder and middle-aged generations who had finished even several classes at school can speak good Polish to this day. My respondents from a small city Gródek Podolski stated that before the war everyone had spoken Polish. Nowadays, mainly older generation speaks it, but in some families, Polish is used by all generations.

Kiedyś nawet Żydzi to rozmawjali po polski ot, wszystkie rozmawjali tutaj w Gródku. Tak było do wojny. Kiedy wzięli władzę, nasze państwo zabroniło rozmawiać po polski, zabronili, kościoła powalili. To wszystko zabronili. I nic, tak, że tylko po ukraiński. Boże broń, ksionżki dzieś żeby była! EK13 – ‘Before the war even Jews spoke Polish, everyone spoke Polish in Gródek. Our authorities had forbidden to speak Polish and destroyed Roman-Catholic Churches. They did not allow anything, so we had to speak Ukrainian. God saves that there were any [Polish] books’; Po polsky rozmawiali, to teraz tak poszło że więcej po ukraiński, rańsze nichto tak, Żydy sąsiedzi żyli i to po polsky z namy AK17 – ‘We spoke Polish, now we speak more Ukrainian. But earlier even our neighbors Jews spoke with us Polish’.

Despite the change of the liturgy into other national languages and despite restrictions on the Polish language, Roman Catholic churches in Ukraine still play a key role in maintaining the national identity of Poles. The respondents state that changing of the language in the Church causes a weakening and loss of the feeling of being a Pole. In their opinion, this causes Polish national identity to disappear. The fundamental conclusion made from the survey by

Roman Dzwonkowski and his colleagues was that without the Polish language in church and in prayer, Poles in Ukraine as a national group has no future and is certainly doomed to an immediate denationalization (Dzwonkowski and others, 2000, p. 222). Therefore, the Catholic religion is an element involving the national minority, which strengthens the Polish national identity, maintains the transmission of cultural traditions, and at the same time separates “us” from “them”.

By way of conclusion, let me return to the question raised in subtitle of my paper – “survival or decline of polishness”. Observations of many researchers point out that Polish will be retained as a home language only to a small extent. It seems that, in the present situation of the language – i.e. the spheres of its functioning – factors such as prestige, as well as universal globalization and spread of bilingualism, might turn out to be decisive for the decay of the Polish language.

During the conference, discussion on the future of the Polish language on the Eastern Borderland it had been indicated a great role of favorable conditions in the process of language revitalization, i. e. the communicative needs to use the language in a society, at the same time national identity, possessing one’s own country and learning language at school ¹. It is characteristic that in the past – during the hard times of cruel persecution – language was passed on in the family. Moreover, today, when there are no such repressions, parents speak to the children in the Ukrainian language they to feel better in kindergarten, at school. In the first place, the communicative needs maintain the language of diaspora.

The survival of “polishness” is connected in many cases with the rebirth of the language in the youngest generations. There are families where language, culture and traditions (especially concerning Christmas and Easter celebrations) have been transmitted from one generation to another. Nowadays, the middle-aged generation often teaches their children Polish, also considering the “hard” economic situation in Ukraine. That is why the prestige of the language becomes higher and young people more often go to Poland for studying and working. At present elements of the Polish culture ² are transmitted to those who are interested in learning Polish. As an example, I will present the

¹ Cp. J. Rieger, *Czy możliwe jest odrodzenie („rewitalizacja”) polszczyzny kresowej?* Konferencja naukowa „Status gwary w języku i kulturze”, Kraków 14–15 września 2015 r.

² For a long time after World War II, the unfavorable political situation of minority caused a break in the cultural transmission between generations in many families.

results of the research conducted by Roman Dzwonkowski and his team in the beginning of XXI century concerning the main reasons for learning the Polish language in Western Ukraine. They are the following: religious reason “because I want to pray in Polish” (36 %), national reason “because I am Pole” (28 %), understanding the study of Polish as a part of general education (14 %), fascination for language (11 %), willingness to pass on traditions to the next generation (6 %) (Dzwonkowski and other, 2001, p. 37–38).

Conclusions and prospects for research

The basic factors determining the preservation of the national identity of Poles in Podolia are the transmission of remembrance about the Polish origins of the family, religious awareness (i.e. mass and sacraments in Polish), Polish traditions/rituals and, of course, the Polish language. Therefore, we see that language as a bearer of the sense of identity influences a person’s self-presentation, becoming its integral component. Language awareness often coincides with national and ethnic identity.

To say in brief, the Polish population has never stopped to feel as a related part of the entire Polish nation, always kept national traditions, they were faithfully committed to God and the Catholic Church, and sympathize with the Polish state. Though the struggle with Poles started after The November Uprising (1832–1833), when nearly 60 thousand people were resettled from Eastern Podolia (Wielhorski, 1959, p. 88; Kolberg, 1994, p. XI). Other important factor was the obstruction of religious practices by closing churches and monasteries (including the liquidation of Kamieniec Podolski episcopate in 1866) and imposing orthodoxy.

Strong attachment to national and religious values was in conflict with the trends and activities of the Soviet policy. The process of sovietization among Polish population from its very beginning, in the middle of the 1920s, was very slow. Poles began to organize Polish village councils of collective farms (in the Khmelnytsky district there were 15 village councils, which were the most numerous in Ukraine)¹. Poles in Podolia were considered as “class of landowner and kulak”, “the nation’s enemy”, “enemies of socialism and leninism”, “counter-revolutionary element” that constantly sabotage the working masses (Stroński, 1998, 177). The period of World War II led to

¹ *Polskie rady wiejskie na Ukrainie Radzieckiej (Wyniki przeglądu rad polskich 15/VIII – 15/X 1927 rok)*, Charków 1928, s. 97–98.

the final “erasure” of Polish civilization in Podolia. The Soviet authorities pursue a policy of depolonization and elimination of the Polish population (particularly in Podolia and Zhytomyr region) by forced collectivization (from 1927), hunger¹ (1932–1933), imprisonment and deportation to eastern parts of the country, Siberia and Kazakhstan (1935–1936), shooting during the “Polish operation” (1937–1938) etc. This painful experience is considerably reflected in the collective memory of informants – some of them were witnesses of these events, others know the history from their parents/grandparents.

A nasze Polacy to oni gdzie, oni wysłani w Kazachstani, oni tam można ja wiem ilie setki siemiłej, jakie byli zasłani w Kazachst'an Polaków, potem na Don, potem jeszcze porozseliane to tut WM19 – ‘Our Poles were exiled to Kazakhstan, hundreds of families were sent into exile to Kazakhstan, later to Russian on the river Don; and also they were settled in other places of Ukraine’; Na Ukrainie tuđy w głubinke to stylu nie zabierali, a wsio tut wo Chmiel'nicka oblas' najwięcej postradała, represacja była (...) Nic nie zrobisz, wo tak i my przeżyli. [Polaków wysyłali?] I Poliaków wysyłali, i kogo tyko nu mieli jakieś podozri'enija wsich wysyłali. Liudzie uczone, i razne profesor'a, i razne akademiiki to jich co nie gnębili. A potem naczeni i prostych zabirać MSz36 – ‘They did not take away people from remote places in Ukraine, but mostly people suffered from the Khmelnytskyi oblast, here there was a strong repression (...) We cannot do anything, that's how we survived. [Have the Poles been exiled?] Certainly, the Poles and others if the authorities only had some suspicions, so everyone had been exiled. Firstly, educated people, different professors and academicians were oppressed, and later on, they started to take away ordinary people’;

A byli takie rodziny, ojciec i matka młody, i ot w nocy przyszli zabrali ojca, matka sie została z malieńkim dziecku. Później na drugi noc zabrali i matki, i to dziecko samo płacze. To chto jego wospłitować to boji si, bo to niby wrağy naroda byli my WM22 – ‘There were such young families, and at night they came and took the father, the mother stayed with her little child. Later, on the second night, they took the mothers, and the child is crying alone. So, someone was afraid to bring up a child, because we were considered nation's enemy’.

The authorities tried to destroy the national consciousness of Poles by cultivating stereotypical thinking and behavioral patterns of the “soviet man” by means of cultural assimilation and russification.

¹ Hunger served as a tool for implementing a state policy aimed at the rapid establishment of a collective farm system and the nationalization of agricultural production (Stroński, 2017).

Despite the Stalinism's repression against Poles, including all the efforts to suppress religion, Polish culture and language, the element of "polishness" survived in Podolia. Many Poles came back from Kazakhstan and Siberia to their native place of birth. Certainly, some people were frightened, some were assimilated and try to adopt for living in Ukrainian reality. Others demonstrated pride, patriotism and courage, especially in struggle for the renewing churches or trying to prove their origin and convince authorities to write down Polish nationality in the passport. Poles generally show a strong sense of national unity. Beginning from the eighties, Poles started to renovate churches, chapels, cemeteries, Polish schools and establish Polish organizations (from 1991); their activity was grown especially in XXI century. It is beyond doubt, that the religiousness of Poles was very high. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed undeniable authority and had a great influence among the inhabitants. The informants often stated, that it was very difficult to survive, e.g. *Ciężko było przeżywać, ale przeżyli, kto wyżył i cierpiał i stał na swoim, i tak do dzisiaj swoje* WM22 – 'It was hard to live through, but we survived; who lived and suffered but stood on their own until now'. In spite of the changing political map and administrative authorities in this region, a Pole always becomes a Pole (this opinion dominates among older informants). Inhabitants declare their national identity, not their state attribution.

However, if we look deeply to the problem of Poles' self-identification in Podolia region in Ukraine, we can see some similarities with other regions in Belarus and Lithuania (e.g. Braslaw and Vilnius regions). On the other hand, the determiners of Polish identification are different in some way, because of various historical, social and cultural aspects that influence greatly on the situation of Polish minority in each country. The article gives an outline of the subject matter being one of the fields of my interest. In prospects, I intend to study these issues more deeply and thoroughly, taking into consideration such components as "identity – language¹ – culture".

¹ Cp. J. Domitrak, *Słownik polszczyzny Gródka Podolskiego – założenia metodologiczne* [w:] M. Bańko, E. Rudnicka i W. Decyk-Zięba (red.), *Leksykografia w różnych kontekstach*. Tom 2. Biblioteka „Prac Filologicznych” 2020, s. 75–94. The article is concerning the methodological assumptions of preparing dictionary of Polish dialect in Gródek, that allow me to show the status of the Polish language in small towns as an important source for transmission of the knowledge about culture, customs, and history.

Allow me to leave you with the words of George R. R. Martin: “Never forget what you are, for surely the world will not. Make it your strength. Then it can never be your weakness. Armour yourself in it, and it will never be used to hurt you”¹.

References

- Babiński, G. (1997). *Pogranicze polsko-ukraińskie. Etniczność, zróżnicowanie religijne, tożsamość*. Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos.
- Buczyński, S. (1862). *Podole, Wołyń i Ukraina*. Lwów: Drukiem Kornela Pillera.
- Cygan, S. (2011). *Przejawy świadomości językowej mieszkańców wsi końca XX wieku na przykładzie Lasocina na Kielecczyźnie*. Kielce: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczego Jana Kochanowskiego.
- Dzwonkowski, R., Gorbaniuk, O., & Gorbaniuk, J. (2000). *Postawy katolików obrządku łacińskiego na Ukrainie wobec języka polskiego*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego.
- Kabzińska, I. (1999). *Wśród „kościelnych Polaków”: wyznaczniki tożsamości etnicznej (narodowej) Polaków na Białorusi*. Warszawa: Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii PAN.
- Krasowska, H. (2012). *Mniejszość polska na południowo-wschodniej Ukrainie*. Warszawa: Instytut Slawistyki PAN.
- Kolberg, O. (1994). *Dziela wszystkie. Podole*. T. 47 (D. Pawlakowa, red.). Poznań: Polskie Towarzystwo Ludoznawcze.
- Rieger, J. (1996). Identyfikacja narodowa i religijna Polaków na Ukrainie. In J. Lewandowski (Red.), *Trudna tożsamość. Problemy narodowościowe i religijne w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX i XX wieku* (s. 110–130). Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej.
- Rieger, J. (2019). *Język polski na Kresach*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG.
- Rieger, J., Cechosz-Felczyk, I., & Dziegiel, E. (2002). *Język polski na Ukrainie w końcu XX wieku*. Cz. 1. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper.
- Skok, Z. (2007). *Podolska legenda. Powstanie i pogrzeb polskiego Podola*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Iskry.
- Stroński, H. (1998). *Represje stalinizmu wobec ludności polskiej na Ukrainie w latach 1929–1939*. Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie „Wspólnota Polska”, 1998.
- Stronskyi, H. Y. (2017). Polskie naseleńnia USRR v umovakh Holodomoru 1932–1933 rr. *Ukraiński istorychnyi zhurnal*, 4 (535), 95–128 [in Ukrainian].
- Synak, B. (1998). *Kaszubska tożsamość: ciągłość i zmiana: studium socjologiczne*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego.
- Wandycz, P. (1994). *Pod zaborami. Ziemia RP w latach 1795–1918*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy.
- Welhorski, W. (1959). Ziemia Ukrainne Rzeczypospolitej. Zarys dziejów. In *Pamiętnik Kijowski*. Londyn: Nakładem Koła Kijowian.

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/227321-never-forget-what-you-are-for-surely-the-world-will>.

Юлія Домітрак

САМОІДЕНТИФІКАЦІЯ ТА МОВНА СВІДОМІСТЬ ПОЛЯКІВ НА СХІДНОМУ ПОДІЛЛІ: ЗБЕРЕЖЕННЯ ЧИ ЗАНЕПАД «ПОЛЬСЬКОСТІ»? (на матеріалах із Городка Подільського, зібраних на межі ХХ–ХХІ ст.)

Постановка проблеми. Історична, мовна і культурна спадщина польської меншини на території Західної України привертала увагу польських і українських науковців починаючи з другої половини ХХ ст. та залишається актуальною сьогодні. Останнім часом можна відзначити зростання інтересу до вивчення польського питання в історичному контексті крізь призму архівних документів, в яких показано ставлення радянської влади до громадян польського походження. Теоретичною основою поданого у статті аналізу слугують праці Януша Рігера (1996, 2019) і Гелени Красовської (2007, 2012), в яких висвітлено проблематику ідентифікації поляків у Західній і Південно-Східній Україні.

Мета статті. У статті розглянуто основні категорії самоідентифікації польської меншини, а також деякі аспекти релігійної і мовної свідомості на Східному Поділлі (на схід від річки Збруч) – території, яка в ХVІІІ ст. входила до складу Російської імперії. Аналіз ґрунтується на аудіозаписах, зібраних під час польових досліджень на межі ХХ–ХХІ століть у містечку Городок Подільський та його околицях. Городок був культурним і релігійним центром, в якому проживала значна кількість поляків. Місцеві поляки вважали його «другою Варшавою», або «своєю маленькою Варшавою». Автор аналізує, який образ ідентифікації відображається у висловлюваннях місцевих жителів польського походження, з'ясовує, що спонукає респондентів визнавати себе поляками та описує способи винищення польського населення на Східному Поділлі, вказуючи на основні фактори, які перешкождали самоідентифікації поляків.

Методи дослідження. Під час аналізу матеріалів використовували такі методи дослідження: метод відкритого біографічного інтерв'ю, емпіричний аналіз даних, метод опису одиничних випадків (*case study*), а також соціолінгвістичний підхід, яких дає змогу показати сучасну мовну ситуацію на тлі історичних і соціальних умов.

Основні результати дослідження. Спостереження та аналіз зібраних матеріалів свідчать про високу свідомість ідентифікації поляків і добре збережену польську діалектну мову (навіть у змішаних сім'ях). Зазначимо, що католицьке віровизнання є елементом, який інтегрує етнічну меншину, зміцнює польську національну ідентичність, сприяє передаванню культурних традицій і збереженню польської мови. Мова як носій почуття ідентичності впливає на самоідентифікацію людини, стає її невід'ємною складовою. Визначено, що збереження «польськості» у багатьох випадках пов'язане з відродженням мови у молодшого покоління, її комунікативною функцією в суспільстві і вивченням мови у школі.

Висновки і перспективи. Незважаючи на згубну політику радянської влади щодо поляків і всі її намагання ліквідувати релігію, польську культуру і мову, польське населення ніколи не переставало почувати себе невід'ємною частиною польського народу і держави, підтримувало національні традиції, залишалося відданим католицькій церкві, намагалось зберегти свою мову, а також передати молодому поколінню збережену в пам'яті історію. Розглядаючи проблематику ідентифікації поляків на Поділлі в Україні, варто порівняти її з іншими регіонами Східних Кресів, наприклад, із Браславським районом у Білорусі та Віленським районом у Литві, у яких простежується значна схожість у процесі їх самоідентифікації. З іншого боку, детермінанти польської ідентифікації деякою мірою відрізняються, зважаючи на різні історичні, соціальні і культурні аспекти, які мають великий вплив на ситуацію у кожній країні зокрема.

Ключові слова: польська меншина в Україні, Поділля, Городок Подільський, самоідентифікація, релігійна ідентичність, мовна свідомість, польська діалектна мова.



Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0)

Матеріал надійшов 12.08.2020