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## **SOCIAL AND ETHNIC TRANSFORMATIONS OF PODILLIA PROVINCE IN THE POST-REFORM PERIOD (1862-1872)**

**Summary.** *The article is devoted to the study of social and ethnic transformations in Podillia province in the period of 1862-1872, which was a time of significant changes after the Peasant Reform of 1861 and the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1863. On the basis of statistical data, documentary materials, and the works of contemporaries, the author analyzes demographic trends, social structure, and ethnic composition of the region's population and forms their psychological image that corresponded to the post-reform era. Particular attention is paid to the role of the Ukrainian peasantry, Polish gentry, Jewish community, and Russian immigrants in the socio-economic life of the province. The study shows how reforms and political developments affected traditional ways of life, contributing to changes in land tenure, economic activity, and cultural identity of different ethnic groups. The article emphasizes the complexity of relations between ethnic groups, the role of religion in shaping social ties, and the consequences of imperial policy for the development of the region. The results of the study add to the understanding of historical processes in Right-Bank Ukraine in the second half of the nineteenth century.*

**Key words:** *Podillya province, social transformations, ethnic transformations, post-reform period, demography, peasant reform of 1861,*

*Polish uprising of 1863, Ukrainian peasantry, Polish gentry, Jewish community, Russian Empire, social structure, ethnic composition, land tenure, religious relations, Russification, economic changes, cultural identity, socio-economic development, historical processes.*

**Statement of the Problem.** The primary issue addressed in this article is the identification and analysis of key social and ethnic transformations in the Podillia Governorate during the period of 1862–1872, taking into account the impact of reforms, political events, and imperial policies on the region’s demography, social structure, and ethnic development. The Podillia Governorate, during 1862–1872, underwent a period of profound social, ethnic, and economic transformations driven by the reforms of the Russian Empire, particularly the Peasant Reform of 1861, as well as the consequences of the suppression of the Polish Uprising of 1863. These events significantly influenced the demographic structure, social organization, ethnic relations, and psychological landscape of the region. However, despite the importance of this period for the historical development of Right-Bank Ukraine, many aspects of social and ethnic changes remain understudied. In particular, there is a need for in-depth analysis of the impact of reforms on various ethnic groups (Ukrainians, Poles, Jews, Russians), their roles in the socio-economic life of the governorate, and the dynamics of their interrelations. Furthermore, it is crucial to examine how the policy of Russification and land confiscations affected traditional ways of life, cultural identity, and economic practices of the local population.

**Research Methodology.** The study of social and ethnic transformations in the Podillia Governorate during 1862–1872 is based on a comprehensive approach that integrates historical, sociological, and ethnological methods of analysis.

**Analysis of Recent Studies and Publications.** The historiography of the issue under study is quite extensive. Mykhailo Hrushevsky, in his works,

analyzed the impact of Polish domination on the ethnic structure of Podillia and defined the role of the Polish element in the region. Yurii Polishchuk explored the ethnic policies of the Russian Empire and their effects on the Polish and Jewish communities. The condition of the peasantry and the role of the petty nobility in the region's social structure were thoroughly described by Oleksandr Levytsky. Daniel Beauvois focused on conflicts between Polish landowners and Ukrainian peasants, as well as the impact of land reform on the region's economy. Nataliia Temirova analyzed the consequences of the Polish Uprising of 1863 for land ownership in Right-Bank Ukraine. Nataliia Romaniuk studied the economic activities of various ethnic groups, particularly Jews and Poles. Pavlo Chubynsky provided a detailed description of the daily life, customs, and religious practices of Podillia's population, serving as a valuable source for understanding the cultural and religious identity of different ethnic groups and their roles in shaping the region's social environment. A Russian landowner, M.M., who acquired an estate in the governorate in 1863, analyzed the status of Russian landowners and their relationships with the local population. Volodymyr Kononenko examined the role of the Jewish community in the economic and social life of the region. Lev Bazhenov analyzed the historiography of Podillia in the 19th and 20th centuries. Additionally, the issue has been addressed by scholars such as Volodymyr Antonovych, Andrii Gradovsky, Mykhailo Orlovsky, Serhii Lobatynsky, Ivan Danylchenko, Lavrentii Pokhylevych, Mykhailo Symashkevych, Mykhailo Yavorsky, and others.

The publications used cover a wide range of sources, from official statistics to ethnographic descriptions and scholarly works, enabling a comprehensive study of the social, ethnic, economic, and cultural aspects of life in the Podillia Governorate during the post-reform period. Each source makes a significant contribution to understanding the transformations that took place in the region and their impact on various population groups.

**Formulation of the Article’s Objectives.** The article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the social and ethnic changes in the Podillia Governorate, which will contribute to a better understanding of the historical processes in the region and their influence on the formation of the modern sociocultural landscape.

The demographic development of the Podillia Governorate from 1862 to 1872 was characterized by complex and multifaceted processes that reflected profound socio-economic transformations and the cultural peculiarities of the region. This period was marked not only by steady population growth but also by significant changes in its social, religious, and ethnic composition. Between 1862 and 1866, the population of the Podillia Governorate increased by 119,114 people, demonstrating a consistent upward trend.

*Table 1*

**Demographic Development of the Podillia Governorate, 1862–1872**

Year	Total Population	Men	Women	Rural Population	Urban Population	Comments
1862	1,806,364	894,429	911,935	N/A	N/A	Baseline year
1863	1,836,382	910,429	925,953	N/A	N/A	
1864	1,869,935	928,138	941,797	N/A	N/A	
1866	1,925,478	967,877	957,599	N/A	N/A	Increase of 119,114 since 1862
1870	1,988,188	972,388	960,800	N/A	N/A	Average annual growth ~32,374 people
1871	2,191,300	N/A	N/A	2,060,000 (94.01%)	131,000 (5.98%)	First recorded division of population
1872	2,208,100	N/A	N/A	2,076,100	132,000	Population growth compared to 1871

*Source:* Statistical Data on the Podillia Governorate for 1862, 1863, 1864. Kamianets-Podilskyi, 1865, pp. 5, 8–9; Podillia Governorate Statistical Committee. Works of the Podillia Governorate Statistical Committee (with a map of the Podillia Governorate). Kamianets-Podilskyi, 1869, 173 p., pp. 6–7; Statistical Yearbook of the Russian Empire. Series II, Issue X, St. Petersburg, 1875, p. 31

The average annual population growth in the Podillia Governorate was 32,374 people, equivalent to approximately 1.79% of the total population [20, p. 5]. By 1871, the population of the Podillia Governorate reached 2,191,300 individuals, with 2,060,000 residing in rural areas (94.01%) and 131,000 in urban areas (5.98%). In 1872, the population slightly increased to 2,208,100, of which 2,076,100 lived in rural areas and 132,000 in urban areas [7].

Despite the reforms, the social stratification of the governorate’s population into estates persisted. As before, the nobility, clergy, burghers, and peasantry played key roles in society, ensuring its stability and contributing to the development of various ethnolinguistic groups.

Table 2

**Ethnic Composition of the Podillia Governorate**

<b>Social Group</b>	<b>1862</b>	<b>1863</b>	<b>1864</b>	<b>1865</b>	<b>Absolute Change (1862–1865)</b>	<b>Relative Change (1862–1865), %</b>
Nobility	23,889	24,159	24,636	24,982	+1,093	+4.58
Clergy	1,287	1,316	1,342	1,329	+42	+3.26
Burghers	254,364	258,879	256,922	263,828	+9,464	+3.72
Total Population	1,869,361	1,836,382	1,924,572	1,924,572	+55,211	+2.95

*Source:* Statistical Data on the Podillia Governorate for 1862, 1863, 1864. Kamianets-Podilskyi, 1865, pp. 5, 8–9, 10

The majority of the population in the Podillia region was consistently Ukrainian. Alongside them lived Poles, Jews, Russians, Armenians, Tatars, and Greeks. According to Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Polish domination brought a considerable number of Polish and other foreign elements to the region [5, p. 28].

In the post-reform period, despite official changes, the Polish nobility continued to play a dominant role in the region. Their influence was primarily manifested through the magnate-landlord elite, petty nobility, and Roman Catholic clergy, who maintained control over key aspects of life. Burghers and peasants of Polish origin constituted a smaller portion of the population but also

played a role in the region’s socio-economic life. Additionally, it is worth noting that some of the Ukrainian population, for various reasons, identified themselves as Poles, further complicating the ethnic landscape of the region [15, p. 120].

After Podillia became part of the Russian Empire, its inhabitants retained their rights and privileges by decree of Catherine II. The Polish population resided in both urban and rural areas and were predominantly Roman Catholic by faith. On the eve of the Peasant Reform, in 1858, there were 223,920 individuals of Polish nationality in the governorate, accounting for 12.73% of the population [21, pp. 270–271]. By the early 1870s, the General Staff of the Army estimated the number of Poles in Podillia at approximately 233,600 [10, p. 9].

According to contemporary accounts, in the post-reform period, Poles were noticeably distinct in appearance from Russians. They were generally shorter in stature, with smaller heads, more refined hands and feet, and rounder faces. Among the lower classes, individuals typically had blue or gray eyes, which were not particularly expressive, and light brown hair. Women often had larger blue eyes, pointed noses, fuller faces, and small feet [13, p. 115].

A distinctive characteristic of the Poles was their fervent, passionate love for their homeland, their homes, and their people. They were endowed with a lively, brilliant intellect and talents for science and the arts. A martial spirit was inherent in all Poles, and they consistently stood out in any context.

The Polish people were cheerful, sociable, and hospitable. A sense of propriety was well-developed even among the poorest peasants. Polish peasants valued work and approached their duties conscientiously. However, they showed little concern for cleanliness and order and had a fondness for drinking. Poles were characterized by a flexible disposition, which allowed them to remain optimistic. Vanity played a significant role in their lives, and for fleeting pleasures, they often sacrificed their wealth. They were also reproached for frivolity, a lack of practicality in everyday matters, and a tendency toward an improper lifestyle [13, p. 116].

The Polish nobility sharply distinguished itself from the general population. They had distinct facial features, dark eyes and hair, and often an aquiline nose. Women of higher wealth had striking faces; they were tall, with dark hair, slender figures, and delicate complexions. Their entire appearance and demeanor exuded noble pride.

However, the petty, impoverished nobility (shliakhta) rarely stood out from the masses. A shliakhtych was often as uneducated as a peasant, equally poor and coarse, yet proud and courageous. Shliakhtychs were prone to boastfulness and filled with pretensions, demanding respect and honor that did not always align with their material circumstances or education [13, p. 117].

The Polish population was generally more educated than Russians and Ukrainians. Every shliakhtych, many Catholic peasants, and even women were proficient in reading. They attended church with prayer books. Few nobles were unfamiliar with the French language or the history of Poland and Lithuania. The education of wealthy landowners was often superficial, consisting mainly of social refinement and language proficiency. According to Russian nobles of the post-reform period, the Polish gentry and shliakhta were haughty, proud, arrogant, fanatical, stubborn, boastful, quarrelsome, and vociferous [11, p. 3].

By social status, representatives of the Polish nationality in the Podillia Governorate, as mentioned earlier, were divided into peasants, burghers, nobles, and clergy. The nobility was further categorized into prominent magnates, aristocrats, and middle and petty nobility (shliakhta). The shliakhta was also divided into those who provided documentation of their noble origins to the Russian authorities and those who could not. The latter, however, continued to enjoy the privileges of Russian nobility. A significant portion of the shliakhta did not own land and was therefore compelled to serve wealthier nobles or work in state institutions. D.I. Bibikov (1838–1852), during his tenure as governor-general, noted in a secret memorandum sent to Nicholas I that “in the three governorates of Right-Bank Ukraine, there are still 178,000 individuals who



consider themselves nobles, while barely 3,000 are worthy of belonging to the shliakhta.” According to Yurii Polishchuk’s research, at the beginning of the 19th century, 89% of the nobles in the Podillia Governorate were Poles [16, pp. 36, 39]. As of 1864, the governorate had a population of 1,869,935, of which 209,234 were Poles (11.18%), and 229,993 individuals (12.29%) professed the Roman Catholic faith. Regarding social estate affiliation, there were 17,280 hereditary nobles and 7,445 personal nobles [12, p. 29]. While noble status and Catholic faith are not absolute indicators of Polish origin, they serve as markers for assessing the general presence of individuals of Polish descent in the region. According to Oleksandr Levytsky’s research, approximately 64,000 individuals in the Podillia Governorate belonged to the petty or landless shliakhta [9, p. 239].

In the Podillia region, the earliest large-scale landlord estates in Ukraine were established. The most powerful estates belonged to landowners of Polish origin, including families such as the Potocki, Lubomirski, Branicki, Rzewuski, and others. These families gained significant influence and wealth due to their vast landholdings, which had been formed in the region since the early modern period.

In 1863, according to the research of French historian Daniel Beauvois, the average size of these magnates’ latifundia was 710.8 desiatinas (a Russian land unit, approximately 1.09 hectares). This fact highlights the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few wealthy families, which played a significant role in the economic and social life of the region [3, p. 23]. It should be noted that a latifundia is a large landholding consisting of multiple estates, often encompassing various types of assets (agricultural lands, forests, industries, etc.). The size of latifundia in Podillia was striking, especially in the context of the region’s land resources at the time. For the Polish nobility, land ownership was not only an economic asset but also a crucial element of their identity. The size of landholdings shaped a clear social hierarchy, with the nobility at the top and Ukrainian peasants at the bottom.



Possessing strong economic positions, these families aspired to a corresponding role in the political life of the Russian Empire. According to Nataliia Temirova’s research, Polish separatism was observed in Right-Bank Ukraine [22, p. 144]. The Polish nobility, leveraging their significant influence over local administration and the Ukrainian population, effectively dictated the conditions of life in the region, substantially limiting the rights of local residents. According to data from the 10th Revision (census) conducted in 1857–1858, 1,355 Polish landlords owned 435,261 peasants, demonstrating their considerable economic power [18, pp. 90–92]. There were so many petty nobles that they occupied all available positions as officials and private clerks, while those who could not secure such roles moved to rural areas and engaged in agriculture. They resided in various estates and frequently moved from place to place, serving as estate managers or becoming leaseholders [11, p. 9].

According to Oleksandr Levytsky, the Polish nobility (shliakhta) represented a class of “parasites” and harmful drones who lived at the expense of the common people. Leveraging their noble status without paying taxes or fulfilling obligations required of the nobility, they disdained productive labor and instead sought employment with wealthier lords as stewards, managers, clerks, or similar roles. Others leased estates and harshly exploited the Ukrainian population. Many nobles in the governorate served as minor officials, and some surrounded magnate princes, acting as hangers-on or jesters. Police officials were also frequently of Polish origin [9, p. 239]. Feeling unaccountable, they often resorted to arbitrariness and cruelty toward peasants, who were entirely defenseless.

In the post-reform period, Poles controlled large landholdings and leased them to Ukrainian peasants. The rent was often high, leading to financial dependence among peasants and forcing them to work the land under unfavorable conditions. The land issue was the primary source of conflict between Poles and Ukrainians. Polish landowners sought to preserve their estates, while Ukrainians

fought for their land rights, resulting in social tensions and occasional armed clashes. Within Polish society, there was a widespread perception that Ukrainians posed a threat to their interests, which fueled mutual animosity and complicated relations between the two groups. Among wealthier Polish families, marriages between Catholics and Orthodox Christians ceased, and among poorer strata, Catholic priests resisted such unions [23, p. 227]. A notable example is that of Count Tyszkiewicz, who participated in the Polish Uprising of 1863 and was exiled to Siberia. There, he married a Russian woman. Upon his return after receiving a pardon, his brother, the owner of a vast estate, and other millionaire members of the family refused to accept him unless he expelled his wife and children. The count refused to abandon his family, who had shared both his joys and hardships. To survive, he opened a bakery in the town and eked out a living [11, p. 7].

Magnates often spent their days abroad, while less wealthy nobles enjoyed themselves in the governorate or in the capitals of the Russian Empire. Their children were educated by foreign governesses, leaving them unfamiliar with the Russian language and laws. This lack of knowledge led them to avoid state service and instead aspire to elective positions. Petty landowners sent their children to gymnasiums, after which they often enrolled in Kyiv University [4, p. 75].

The Peasant Reform undermined the economic foundation of the Polish nobility, which had traditionally relied on serf labor. The subsequent suppression of the January Uprising of 1863, aimed at restoring Polish statehood, led to intensified repressions by the Russian authorities. Decrees on estate confiscations, restrictions on Poles purchasing land in the Southwestern Region, and the policy of Russification created an atmosphere of pressure and instability.

These circumstances affected not only the material condition of the Poles but also their psychological state. The Polish ethnic group, primarily represented by the nobility, intelligentsia, and peasants of Polish origin, faced the need to

adapt to new conditions while preserving their cultural and national identity. In this context, traits that defined the psychological portrait of Poles in the post-reform period emerged: resilience to external challenges, pride in their historical heritage, and a drive for self-preservation through culture and religion.

Resilience became a defining characteristic of the Polish ethnos amid political and economic pressure. Following the suppression of the January Uprising of 1863, the Russian authorities implemented measures aimed at weakening the Polish nobility. Land confiscations, restrictions on rights, and intensified Russification created challenging conditions for maintaining social status and cultural identity. Nevertheless, Poles demonstrated remarkable endurance, continuing to uphold their traditions and way of life. For instance, in the Podillia Governorate, Polish families preserved their language and religious practices through family gatherings and private worship, enabling them to resist assimilationist pressures. This resilience was not merely a response to external circumstances but also a manifestation of inner strength rooted in their belief in their historical significance.

Pride in their origins and historical past remained a central feature of the Polish national character. Despite repressions, Poles maintained a sense of dignity, which was evident in cultural and charitable initiatives aimed at supporting national spirit. The Potocki family, for example, continued to fund educational projects, theaters, and libraries, which served as centers of Polish culture [2, p. 117].

In the new conditions, Poles demonstrated adaptability, as the abolition of serfdom undermined their traditional sources of income. Wealthier segments showed flexibility by shifting toward entrepreneurship or trade. Some Polish landowners in the Podillia Governorate began investing in industries (such as sugar production and distilling) or engaging in commercial activities, which allowed them to maintain their social status [17, p. 113].

The Polish mentality leaned toward collectivism, which was evident in their efforts to preserve community through family ties, the church, and cultural societies. The family played a central role in the social structure, serving as a bastion of support and a conduit for passing down traditions. At the same time, elements of individualism were noticeable among the nobility, particularly in the economic sphere. The mentality of the Polish ethnos in the post-reform period was shaped by social structures, religious traditions, and the political context. It was characterized by a blend of collectivism and individualism, deep religiosity, and a skeptical attitude toward authority. The defeat of the January Uprising in 1864 became a national tragedy for Poles, profoundly affecting their psyche and consciousness. It instilled feelings of powerlessness, disappointment, and national grief. Many lost faith in the possibility of armed struggle for independence and began seeking alternative ways to preserve their national identity [1, p. 325].

The experience of political repression and Russification fostered distrust among Poles toward official institutions. Reforms introduced by the Russian authorities were perceived as attempts to eradicate Polish identity, fueling skepticism and a desire for autonomy. Decrees mandating the use of the Russian language in education and administration met with passive resistance: Poles continued to use their native language in domestic settings and private gatherings. This skepticism became an integral part of their mentality, reflecting a historically grounded wariness of external governance [15, p. 152].

The indigenous population of the Podillia Governorate consisted of Ukrainians, who predominantly resided in rural areas, though a significant number also lived in urban centers. The peasantry made up more than three-quarters of the population, remaining the primary social estate.

Statistical sources from the post-reform period categorized Podillia's peasants into four main groups: state peasants, proprietary peasants, colonists,

and odnodvortsy (single-homesteaders), each with distinct characteristics in terms of land use and legal status.

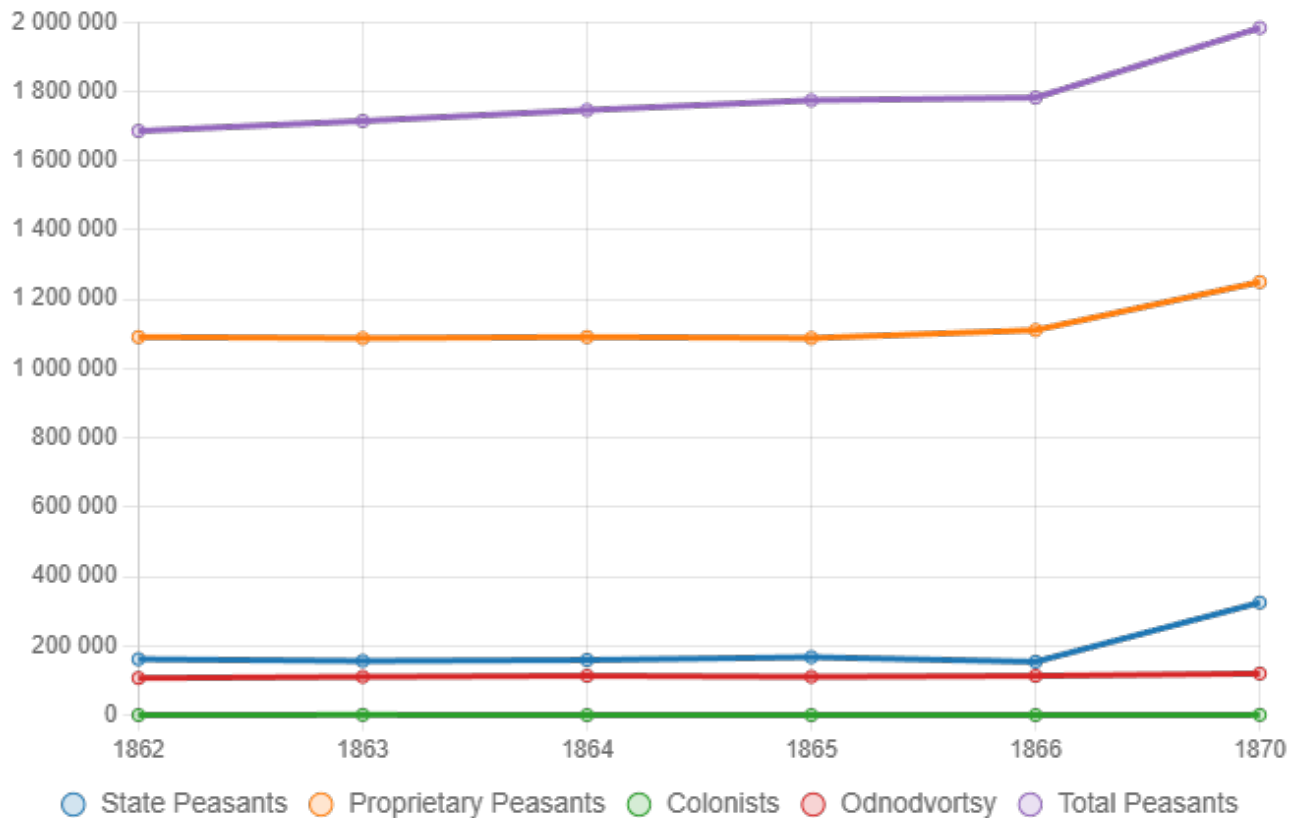
*Table 3*

**Distribution and Number of Peasants in the Podillia Governorate,  
1862–1870**

<b>Year</b>	<b>State Peasants</b>	<b>Proprietary Peasants</b>	<b>Colonists</b>	<b>Odnodvortsy</b>	<b>Total Peasants</b>
1862	161,604	1,091,231	485	107,226	1,685,724
1863	156,627	1,087,887	1,031	110,912	1,714,505
1864	159,315	1,091,353	316	113,772	1,745,943
1865	167,547	1,088,156	285	110,934	1,774,224
1866	154,268	1,111,146	366	113,600	1,781,879
1870	325,000	1,250,000	948	120,120	1,983,188

*Source:* compiled based on systematized data from various sources

To visualize the trends in the peasant population of the Podillia Governorate from 1862 to 1870, as shown in Table 3, I can create a chart. Below is a chart illustrating the distribution and growth of the peasant categories over this period.



This chart displays the trends in the number of state peasants, proprietary peasants, colonists, odnodvortsy, and the total peasant population in the Podillia Governorate from 1862 to 1870. The data highlights the significant growth in the total peasant population, with proprietary peasants forming the largest group throughout the period.

According to contemporary accounts, during the post-reform period, the Ukrainian population of the Podillia Governorate was characterized by a kind and calm disposition. They were deeply attached to their beautiful homeland, cherished a settled lifestyle, their fertile land, their oxen, their hearth, their rewarding labor, and took pride in their role as farmers. Overall, this people stood at a high moral level [13, p. 35]. The Ukrainian community was distinguished by a high degree of mutual trust and honesty, reflecting their traditional, patriarchal way of life. This may explain the relatively low prevalence of theft. Notably, the

Ukrainian language lacked a specific term for a petty thief, using the general term "zlodii" (thief), which may indicate the rarity of such behavior in everyday life.

Researchers highlight the Ukrainian mentality's relative indifference to accumulating material wealth. The traditional Ukrainian peasant often did not understand the pursuit of riches and showed little interest in industrial activities, viewing them with a degree of disdain. The only traditional trade that garnered respect was chumak trade (ox-cart trading). Ukrainians were sometimes considered impractical in domestic matters, but such assessments were not always fair, as they often failed to account for cultural and historical contexts [13, p. 36].

The Ukrainian people were endowed with a keen, subtle, and often profound intellect, capable of sustained and diligent work. While their minds might not always react quickly, they grasped subjects clearly and thoroughly. When meeting strangers, locals did not overwhelm them with words or rush to display their intellectual prowess, instead behaving with restraint [13, p. 36].

The population of Podillia was also characterized by deep religiosity, loyalty to the monarchy, and a strong connection to the land. However, they displayed two notable traits when dealing with outsiders: distrust and caution. These qualities likely developed due to the region's long history of conflicts and the need to seek protection from various rulers. As a result, a worldview rooted in distrust and caution emerged. In the post-reform period, the situation of Podillia's peasants differed from their counterparts in the internal governorates due to the lack of close social ties between peasants and landlords, often accompanied by concealed animosity [6, p. 5].

The psychological portrait of the Ukrainian ethnos in the Podillia Governorate during the post-reform period is complex and multifaceted. The national character of Ukrainians was defined by resilience, diligence, and a balance between individualism and collectivism. Their mentality combined traditionalism with caution toward authority and emotional depth. National consciousness was in its formative stage, complicated by Russification but fueled



by hopes for freedom. Ethnic stereotypes reflected both pride in their identity and the influence of external prejudices.

The people of Podillia demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of the challenges of post-reform life. The abolition of serfdom granted freedom but did not provide a sufficient economic foundation, forcing peasants to survive in conditions of poverty and uncertainty. This endurance became a psychological adaptation to prolonged oppression. The land remained the cornerstone of life, and Podillians invested immense efforts in its cultivation. Even after the reform, when peasants received land allotments, their labor was directed toward self-sufficiency and fulfilling redemption payments, underscoring the industrious spirit of the ethnos.

The Ukrainian mentality during this period was grounded in deep respect for customs, religion, and family values. Orthodoxy played a pivotal role, shaping moral guidelines and providing solace amid changes [13, p. 37]. The experience of serfdom and the repressions following the Polish Uprising of 1863 fostered a skeptical attitude toward Russian authorities. Podillian often perceived reforms as yet another attempt at deception, which reinforced their insularity and desire for autonomy.

Ukrainians saw themselves as hardworking, peace-loving, and deeply tied to the land. The image of the "khlaborob" (farmer) became a symbol of their identity, reflecting pride in their labor. The Russian authorities often stereotyped Ukrainians as obedient but culturally limited, while the Polish nobility viewed them as "uneducated peasants," highlighting ethnic divisions. These prejudices influenced Ukrainian self-perception while simultaneously fueling resistance.

Unlike many other regions of the Russian Empire, the Podillia Governorate was notable for its significant Jewish population, which played a key role in its socio-economic life. Jewish communities were concentrated in towns and urban centers, where they dominated artisanal production and trade, contributing to the development of the urban economy and shaping its distinctive character.

In terms of appearance, Jews were generally described as attractive, with black hair, intelligent dark eyes with a soft rather than sparkling gaze, aquiline or sometimes straight noses, strikingly white teeth, and a swarthy, matte-pale complexion. Their facial expressions, posture, and every feature conveyed a sense of timidity, softness, and often subservience or deference. Beneath this softness, however, their innate passion shone through, expressed in lively facial expressions, vigorous gestures, sharp changes in vocal intonation, and a gaze that, despite its velvety quality, could occasionally flash with intensity.

Regarding the physical condition of the Jewish population, their tendency toward weaker health was attributed not only to historical factors but also to the conditions of their daily lives. Early marriages and large families were typical among Jewish households. Infants were usually breastfed by their mothers, which could lead to the early exhaustion of maternal strength and negatively affect the health of younger children [13, p. 391].

Religious restrictions and inadequate nutrition could negatively impact the physical development of Jews. Jewish boys were introduced to literacy and the study of Jewish religious texts, particularly the Talmud, at an early age, as soon as they were deemed capable of learning.

Jews were described as a people richly endowed with intellect and aptitude for various sciences. However, their mental activity was noted as uniform, with practicality being the dominant trait of their intellect. This practicality led them to prioritize sciences that were directly beneficial to their circumstances [13, p. 393].

The first Jewish communities began forming in Podillia during the Lithuanian-Polish period. During this time, Jews played a key role in trade, primarily acting as intermediaries between local producers and external markets. Their activities fostered economic connections and revitalized trade relations in the region. The kahal, a self-governing Jewish organization, managed the community and served as a liaison with local authorities. Due to legislative

restrictions prohibiting Jews from owning land or engaging in agricultural activities within the Pale of Settlement, their socio-economic role focused on the development of urban manufactories, which shaped their distinct status [8, pp. 72–73].

Jews frequently leased distilleries, dairy farms, mills, ponds, and other facilities from landlords. They also purchased grain and other agricultural products from peasants, providing necessary goods in return. Additionally, Jews owned taverns, inns, and postal stations, which were vital for the development of trade and communication. They were also involved in money lending, crafts, and small-scale trade, making them an integral part of the region’s economic life. During the studied period, Jews did not possess large or medium-sized landholdings, but when they acquired land, they invariably leased it out. In some areas, they monopolized certain industries, particularly cooperage, tanning, tailoring, carpentry, baking, and locksmithing. The majority of workshops in towns were owned by Jews, and transportation of people and goods was exclusively handled by them [12, p. 31].

In 1861, the Jewish population in the Podillia Governorate numbered 195,847, accounting for 12.09% of the total population. By 1864, their numbers had increased to 208,759 (11.16%). In 1866, there was a slight decrease to 205,165 Jews, with 100,449 men and 104,716 women. By 1870, the Jewish population grew again to 242,496 (118,767 men and 123,729 women), representing 12% of the governorate’s total population [19, p. 40].

Jewish entrepreneurs, known for their education and ingenuity, also displayed remarkable patience. They were willing to engage in low-profit operations to ensure a steady income from peasants. Their business model did not prioritize quick enrichment; instead, they aimed for stable capital turnover. Lending to peasants was mutually beneficial, as Jews offered flexible repayment terms, unlike formal institutions that demanded timely repayment in cash only [12, p. 31]. In towns and urban centers, they operated collectively, drawing

strength from their unity, shared interests, and corporate spirit. However, negative stereotypes portrayed them as exploitative, with Ukrainian folklore sometimes depicting Jews as demonic tempters who took human form to seduce Christian souls [14, p. 2].

The psychological portrait of the Jewish ethnos in Podillia during the post-reform period was marked by entrepreneurial spirit, diligence, and resourcefulness. Their engagement in trade, crafts, and finance required flexibility, adaptability, and quick decision-making. These traits enabled them to survive and thrive in the challenging post-reform era. Additionally, Jews were renowned for their education and love of learning, rooted in religious traditions that encouraged the study of sacred texts. This intellectual activity contributed to their cultural development and societal recognition.

The mentality of Podillia’s Jews was predominantly collectivist, with a strong orientation toward community. Religion played a central role in their lives, and the community was the primary unit of social interaction. Mutual help and support were key values that ensured cohesion and survival under external pressures. At the same time, Jews demonstrated tolerance and openness to other cultures, a result of their historical experience.

The national consciousness of Podillia’s Jews in the post-reform period was strong and clearly defined. They were acutely aware of their ethnic and religious identity, shaped by a history of persecution and discrimination by Russian authorities. Despite external pressures, they maintained a sense of dignity and significance. Ethnic stereotypes about Podillia’s Jews were dual-natured. Positive stereotypes emphasized their entrepreneurial spirit, education, and cultural contributions to the region, while negative stereotypes often attributed greed, conspiratorial behavior, and disloyalty to the state. These prejudices influenced attitudes toward Jews from other ethnic groups and partially shaped their self-perception, forcing them to balance pride in their identity with the need to adapt to societal conditions.

Life in the Russian Empire was accompanied by discrimination and persecution, which limited Jewish rights and opportunities. The post-reform period brought some changes, particularly after the Peasant Reform of 1861, but the situation of Jews remained challenging. Religion and culture played a crucial role in shaping their values, providing spiritual support and structure to daily life.

The Russian ethnos in the Podillia Governorate was represented by a small number of Russian landlords in the post-reform period, Old Believer peasants (Pylypony) who had fled to Podillia to escape persecution by Russian authorities, and soldiers and officers of the Russian army. Russian landowners who acquired estates in the region lacked emotional or cultural ties to the area beyond their land interests. For them, land ownership was solely a tool for maximizing profit, not a means of integrating into local society or developing the region. Any reformist ideas, even those with potential long-term benefits, were rejected if they posed even minor inconveniences to their daily lives or threatened short-term profits. They were unwilling to make sacrifices for the common good, as their personal interests dominated over societal needs. This approach perpetuated outdated farming methods, hindered the region’s socio-economic development, and deepened the alienation between Russian landowners and the local population [12, p. 31].

*Table 5*

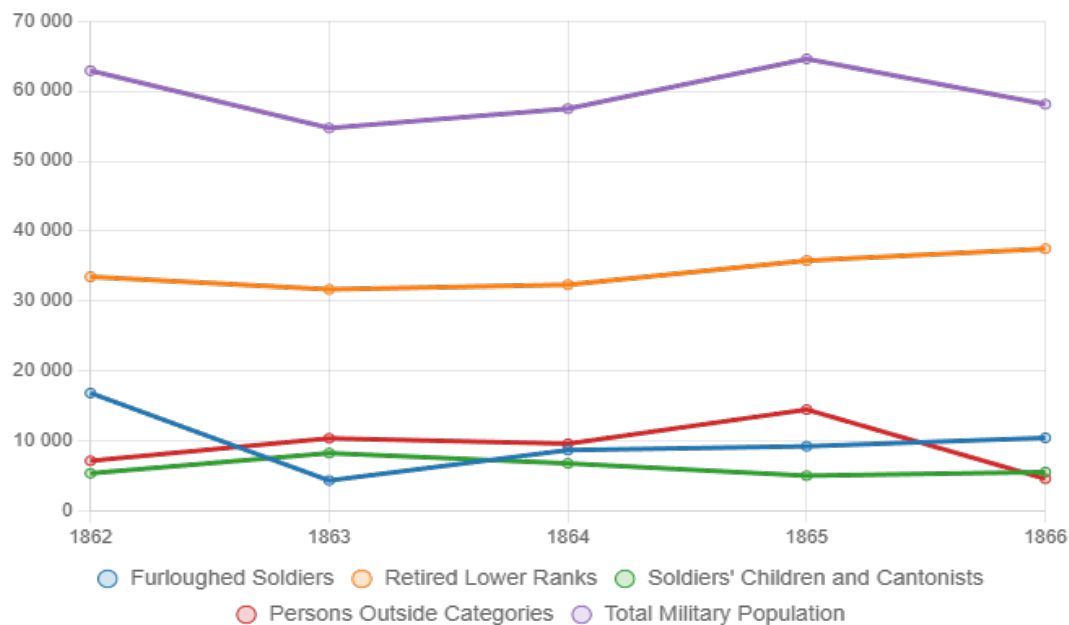
**Military Population in the Podillia Governorate with Percentage of Total Population**

<b>Category of Military Population</b>	<b>1862</b>	<b>1863</b>	<b>1864</b>	<b>1865</b>	<b>1866</b>
Furloughed Soldiers	16,867	4,368	8,712	9,256	10,463
% of Total Population	0.93%	0.24%	0.47%	0.48%	0.53%
Retired Lower Ranks	33,479	31,680	32,345	35,799	37,479
% of Total Population	1.85%	1.73%	1.73%	1.86%	1.89%
Soldiers' Children and Cantonists	5,400	8,285	6,812	5,055	5,576
% of Total Population	0.30%	0.45%	0.36%	0.26%	0.28%
Persons Outside Categories	7,185	10,400	9,628	14,501	4,615
% of Total Population	0.40%	0.57%	0.51%	0.75%	0.23%

Category of Military Population	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866
Total Military Population	62,931	54,733	57,497	64,611	58,133
% of Total Population	3.48%	2.98%	3.07%	3.36%	2.93%

*Source:* compiled based on systematized data from various sources.

To visualize the trends in the military population of the Podillia Governorate from 1862 to 1866, as shown in Table 5, I can create a chart. Below is a chart illustrating the changes in the military population categories over this period.



This chart illustrates the trends in the military population categories in the Podillia Governorate from 1862 to 1866, highlighting fluctuations in each group and the overall military population.

The presence of Russian troops in the province testified to complex transformational processes in the region's social structure. Analysis of tabular data indicates that retired lower ranks constituted the most numerous category throughout the studied period. The relative stability of this group, with fluctuations within 5.4%, suggests the established nature of the military service and demobilization system in the region. At the same time, a sharp decline in the number of indefinitely discharged soldiers, from 16,867 in 1862 to 4,368 in 1863—a reduction of 74.1%—is noteworthy. Although their numbers partially

recovered to 8,712 in 1864, they remained 48.3% lower than the 1862 figure. Particular attention is drawn to the dynamics of the number of soldiers' children and cantonists. This category shows significant fluctuations: from 5,400 in 1862 to a peak of 8,285 in 1863 (an increase of 53.4%), followed by a decline to 5,576 in 1866 [20, pp. 10–11].

The psychological portrait of the Russian ethnos in Podillia during the post-reform period (after 1861), represented by Russian landowners who acquired estates in the province and Russian soldiers stationed there, was as follows. Russian landowners in Podillia were predominantly representatives of the nobility or wealthy classes. Their national character was marked by conservatism, authoritarianism, and adherence to traditional values. They sought to preserve a social order in which the nobility played a leading role, as evidenced by their management of estates and control over peasants. Russian soldiers stationed in Podillia typically came from peasant families and were undergoing mandatory military service. Their character was straightforward and simple, with an emphasis on discipline, obedience, and endurance. These traits were shaped by the conditions of military service and the need to follow orders in a border region.

The mentality of Russian landowners was individualistic with elements of paternalism. They perceived themselves as "fathers" to the peasants, seeking to control their lives and labor. At the same time, they had a penchant for luxury and status display, which underscored their desire for social recognition and affirmed military superiority. The mentality of soldiers was collective, shaped by military service that valued team spirit and mutual support. They were pragmatic and survival-oriented, which helped them cope with the harsh conditions of service and adapt to life in a foreign region.

Russian landowners possessed a strong national consciousness rooted in the idea of a "great Russia" and its civilizing mission in border territories. They saw themselves as bearers of Russian culture and actively promoted the Russification of Podillia, considering it their duty to the empire. Soldiers had a



less pronounced national consciousness, as their focus was primarily on fulfilling military duties. However, they too were carriers of Russian identity, especially in situations of confrontation with other ethnic groups inhabiting Podillia.

Russian landowners viewed the local population through the lens of ethnic stereotypes. For instance, they often considered Ukrainians simple and submissive, Poles rebellious and defiant, and Jews cunning and mercantile. These biases influenced their attitudes toward locals and created social distance. Soldiers held more generalized and simplistic stereotypes about the local population, often based on superficial impressions or hearsay. They perceived locals as different from themselves but lacked a deep understanding of their cultural nuances, which could lead to misunderstandings or conflicts.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research in this area.** During the period of 1862–1872, Podillia province experienced significant social and ethnic changes caused by reforms of the Russian Empire, especially the Peasant Reform of 1861, and political events such as the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1863. The population of the province was steadily growing, mostly rural, and the social division into estates—nobility, clergy, townspeople, and peasantry—remained stable.

The ethnic composition was diverse: Ukrainians constituted the majority alongside Poles, Jews, Russians, and other minorities. The Polish nobility, despite losing some influence due to political repression, continued to be an important social force controlling significant land holdings. The Jewish community played a key role in urban trade and crafts despite restrictions imposed by the imperial government.

The Ukrainian population was characterized by diligence, strong ties to land, and traditional values, but faced pressures of Russification and social limitations. Russian landlords and military personnel acted as instruments of imperial power, spreading Russification policies and control.

Thus, the post-reform period in Podillia was a time of complex transformations where the preservation of traditional structures intersected with the need to adapt to new socio-political realities. These processes laid the foundation for the region's further development within the multi-ethnic empire.

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