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EVERYDAY LIFE OF VOLYN JEWS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (ACCORDING TO THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM IN THE USA)

The interview is an important historical source of studying the problematic issues of the history of Ukraine in the XX century. The interview has a lot of factual materials, interpretations, impressions, observations, and development of the interviewees about the described events. Between the two world wars, Western Volhynia remained a part of Poland. About 10% of its population was Jews. This article examines historical evidence of the life of the Jewish population in the cities of Volhynian Voivodeship in the interwar period from the collection of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). USHMM documents, studies, and interprets the history of the Holocaust. The mission of the museum, due to the museum's strategy, is to help citizens of the world to fight hatred, to prevent genocide, to promote human dignity and to strengthen democracy. Interviews from the USHMM collection are semi-structured and focused, thus aimed at studying a person's "experience" of individual historical divisions and situations that arose.

The examined memoirs show the construction and spread of Jewish public cities of Volhynian Voivodeship, which was inhabited by about two-thirds of their inhabitants. Education issues are most often addressed to in interviews for those reasons that the interwar period lead to the formation and maturation of respondents. The articles describe the construction, professional employment, religious and social life, as well as the perception of urban space. The analysis of memories gives us idea of a young resident of the Jewish community. On average, this was a person from a religious family which had own small business. Such person attended public and religious school, had acquaintances or friends from different ethnic groups, knew several languages and was not interested in politics at all.

The material presented in this article represents the experience of Holocaust victims. Attention of the researchers in this group is evidence of one-sidedness – one of the main methodological problems of oral historical research. The exploitation of traumatic experience in this article is changed due to the chronological limits of the interwar period. Despite the above problem of oral historical research, methods permit us to add some kind of personal to the general narrative.

Keywords: Poland, Volhynia, the interwar period, the city, the town, everyday life, Poles, Jews, Ukrainians.

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GEORGE KENNAN AND THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN TELEGRAPH EXPEDITION

The article aims to analyze the participation of George Kennan, a prominent U.S. expert on Russian affairs, in the Western Union telegraph expedition and explain in what way it shaped his outlook on the Russian Empire. The research pays special attention to the factors that led to the development of Kennan's affectionate feelings towards Russia and the impact they made on his views. The explorer's travelogue "Tent Life in Siberia", which serves as the main primary source for this research, shows that after the first journey Kennan showed very little awareness of the tsarist's repressive policy and therefore created a positive public image of Russia in the U.S.

Keywords: George Kennan, Western Union telegraph expedition, U.S.-Russia relations, Siberia, Siberian exile system.

Problem statement. In the mid-nineteenth century, the relations between the United States and the Russian Empire were rather affectionate. Occasionally, there were times of minor conflicts, but they did not have much influence on a diplomatic climate in general. The historic change from friendship to hostility began in the 1890s. That was the time when America was in desperate need of the specialists who knew Russian affairs, especially from within the Empire, and could give some advice to U.S. policymakers. One of the most prominent experts of this period was George Kennan (1845-1924). His career as a specialist on Russia began in 1865 when he visited this country for the first time as a member of a telegraph expedition. Although the project was not successful, it made a tremendous impact on Kennan, sparking his interest in Russia. During the lifetime, Kennan went from being a Russophile to becoming a vigorous fighter against the tsarist's abuses of basic human rights. One of the most long-term results of his work was

making a sharp shift in American public opinion of Russia from poorly informed friendliness to strong awareness, that later had a huge impact on the intergovernmental relations. Along with the importance of the later period of Kennan's life, one must also pay attention to his first naïve encounters with Siberia that would have lasting formative effects on his character. These matters can still be relevant today due to Russia's continuous aggressive foreign policy, hence the need to understand the origins of Russian propaganda and its influence on common people's experience.

Analysis of sources and literature. George Kennan described his first journey to Russia in his famous travelogue "Tent Life in Siberia: And Adventures Among the Koraks and Other Tribes in Kamtchatka and Northern Asia". First published in 1870, it became the most famous of all of Kennan's writings. The travelogue is our main source of the author's early observations and reflections on the Russian Empire and its people, in which he wanted "to convey as clear and

accurate an idea as possible of the inhabitants, scenery, customs and general external features of a new and comparatively unknown country" [1, p. 7].

Secondary sources can be divided into two groups. The first one directly focuses on the biographical aspects of the research and includes the works dedicated to George Kennan's life (among these we should pay special attention to the Kennan's biography written by Frederick F. Travis). The second one provides the historical context of the described events and clarifies the specifics of the Russian-American relations in the middle of the 19th century. Among the most notable researchers who had explored this topic are Norman Saul, Taylor Stults, William A. Williams, Nikolay Bolkhovitinov, Gennadiy Kuropyatkin, etc.

Objectives. This particular article aims to deliver a more nuanced interpretation of George Kennan's participation in the Russian-American telegraph expedition and analyze in what way it shaped his outlook on Russian matters.

Main research material. George Kennan was born in Norwalk, Ohio. He was avidly interested in science and travel from an early age. However, the family's financial difficulties made him begin work at the Cleveland telegraph office at the age of twelve. Later, during the Civil War, Kennan served for the Union forces working as an operator in Cincinnati, the most important telegraph distribution station in the Midwest. After the war, he wanted to continue his studies but instead was forced to work as a telegraphist to support the family. Kennan established himself as a good specialist; yet, the confinement of the office and the constant lack of air slowly weakened his health.

The enterprise that eventually let George Kennan take a break from the telegraph office and introduced him to Russia was the idea of Perry McDonough Collins. Two trips to Russia in the 1850s, including one down the Amur River, had convinced him that East Asia presented a great opportunity for American trade. Collins consequently proposed a scheme that aimed to connect Europe and America with telegraph, a crucial step for his projected development of the region. The proposed line should have run overland through British Columbia and Russian America, under the Bering Strait, and overland again through Siberia to a point with a projected Russian line near the Amur River's mouth. The starting point in America would be a junction with the transcontinental line already under construction by Western Union. During that time, the Western Union Telegraph Company had expanded rapidly under the energetic presidency of Hiram Sibley, one of the leading American entrepreneurs of the period. The company gained control over all telegraph lines in the western United States. Its main competitor was the American Telegraph Company with which Cyrus Field was associated after 1856. The failure of Field's earlier efforts to connect Europe and America telegraphically by means of a transatlantic submarine cable convinced Sibley to listen favorably to Collins in 1861. The support of governmental officials was not difficult to secure. Even those who preferred Field's transatlantic scheme believed that two intercontinental telegraphs would not be too many to serve the needs of the state, so the necessary rights-of-way and other agreements with the Russian and British governments were granted by Collins and American officials.

The project's success naturally required the full cooperation of the Russians because the Russian-American telegraph line was the necessary first step. The line would run more than one thousand miles of British territory, but then nearly three thousand miles further through Russian territory to the mouth of the Amur River. Furthermore, in 1863, when the Russian right-of-way was finally se-

cured, the eastern terminus of the Russian telegraph was at Omsk, three thousand miles west of Nikolaevsk, the proposed point of junction at the mouth of the Amur. As part of the agreement with the U.S., the Russian government was obliged to complete the line to Nikolaevsk in three years. St. Petersburg also instructed all Russian officials along the projected route to give every assistance to the members of the expedition and eventually dispatched both a special commissioner and a naval vessel to facilitate the success of the enterprise.

The prevailing Russian-American friendship reduced the difficulties involved in securing the cooperation of the Russian government. Despite a conflict between American and Russian interests in the Pacific Northwest, the mid-nineteenth century was a period of Russian-American official cordiality, and influential American public opinion supported this friendship. Several factors helped to establish the amicable relations. During the Crimean War, the Russians had supported the U.S. in its traditional claims to freedom of the seas for neutral nations; during the American Civil War, it had supported the Union; and when Britain and France threatened to start a war with Russia during the Polish rebellion in 1863, it had sent its Baltic fleet to safe harbor in the United States. Misunderstanding the true reasons for the fleet sudden appearance, most Americans believed that the Russian Empire had sent its navy to help the forces of the Union, or at least as a forcible demonstration of Russian support for the Union cause. It also seemed to Americans that Alexander II was at last moving the empire toward recognition of greater individual freedom [5, p. 10]. Tsar's liberal reforms in the 1860s furthered the friendly feelings that diplomacy had produced earlier. Secretary of State William Seward summed up the American attitude in late 1863 in the following manner: "In regard to Russia, the case is a plain one. She has our friendship, in every case, in preference to any other European power, simply because she always wishes us well, and leaves us to conduct our affairs as we think best" [2, p. 396]. The cooperation of the two countries in the telegraph project reinforced the cordiality, and the sale of Alaska in 1867 climaxed the entire epoch [7, p. 300].

Collins subsequently secured his agreements with the Russian government with very little difficulties. In March 1864, he transferred the rights-of-way granted by the American and British governments to the Western Union Telegraph Company. That action finally resulted in one of the most remarkable enterprises of the nineteenth century – the Russian-American telegraph expedition.

By summer 1865, the various divisions of the expedition had all finally left San Francisco to start work; by September, all were in place, both in Russian America and in Siberia. In spite of the great physical hardships, by the spring of 1867 work parties had surveyed the entire route of the line and constructed a portion of it. Then, in early spring of 1867, the heads of the company abruptly cancelled the remarkably successful project. Ostensibly, the directors had ended it because of the successful laying of a transatlantic cable in July 1866. Actually, the reasons were rather more complicated, including among other things the unification of the Western Union and the American Telegraph Company that meant that the Western Union would receive a share of the profits from the new Atlantic Cable, so the expense of the Russian-American route apparently became absurd. Thus, the project was terminated.

George Kennan spent almost two years in northeastern Siberia. He was a member of the Asiatic Division of the expedition and examined a part of the telegraph route from

the Bering Strait to the Amur River, supervising the cutting, preparation, and distribution of telegraph poles along the path. That part of Siberia was rather fitting the widespread conception of it as a frozen and desolate land being almost unknown even to Russians themselves. Travel could be done by dog sledge in winter and was impossible in summer due to the extreme soggy and impassability of the tundra; thus, the expedition had to be done during the eight months of winter. The members of the Asiatic Division worked (and often slept) outdoors in very low temperatures. The winter climate in the area caused severe physical hardships, especially since such cold was frequently exacerbated by strong winds from the Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk. The physical suffering was not the only problem that Kennan had to face. The expedition members also had to travel alone for quite a long time and therefore experienced a great deal of psychological pressure because of social isolation. Later Kennan described the feelings produced by such conditions: "The world which you have left, with all its cares, strife and busy activity, fades away into the unreal imagery of a dream; and you seem removed to an infinite distance from all the interests and occupations of your previous life... The cold, still atmosphere, the red, gloomy twilight of the low-hanging sun, and the great white ghastly ocean of snow around you, are all full of cheerless, mournful suggestions, and have a strange unearthliness which you cannot reconcile or connect with any part of your previous life" [5, p. 16]. Not all the members of the Asiatic Division could have endured such harsh conditions. Kennan later recalled that one person had committed suicide after a hard and lonely journey with his only company being dogs and natives with whom he had not been able to communicate, and that man had been "one of the bravest and most capable men in Siberia" [5, p. 17].

Yet, despite the difficulties, Kennan's section of the line would have certainly succeeded had it not been for the Western Union's cancellation of the project. His hopes to reduce family's debts were temporarily disrupted; nevertheless, he aspired to obtain some benefit from the experience.

From the beginning of the expedition, Kennan had been sure that the active publicity surrounding a project would promote its members into the public eye and eagerly sought news of how the undertaking was perceived by the press in the United States. Researchers are not sure exactly how he intended to capitalize on the publicity. One possibility would be to publish an account of his adventures; another – to use the contacts gained through the experience to seek a government position. At one point, Kennan considered a proposal made by Sergey Abaza, a Russian nobleman and the Chief of the Asiatic Division, to apply for the position of secretary to the U.S. minister at St. Petersburg. Abaza's influence would have had a tremendous effect on Russian officials, but apparently, Kennan decided against the effort, although there is no strong evidence to explain his reasons. Frederick Travis argues that the young man rejected a job opportunity simply because it would have confined him again (and the unpleasant memories of routine, unimaginative work still haunted Kennan, who had no desire to come back to it – at least for now) [5, p. 19].

Nevertheless, the Siberian expedition made a great impact on Kennan's perspective. Among other things, it awoke and encouraged his scientific curiosity. Kennan remained an insatiable amateur scientist until his death, and the influence of scientific methodology on his intellectual development is impossible to overestimate. It strongly affected his investigative technique and determined his attitude toward truth as something absolute and ultimate.

The introduction to science had also developed the first religious doubts in Kennan's mind. Before the journey to Siberia, he had been very much attuned to his Puritan heritage, but eventually started to question both the Old Testament's history of the origins of the world and the conception of God.

A remarkable influence on Kennan's reconsideration of Christian theology was his observation of the practice of shamanism, the religion of all the native tribes of north-eastern Siberia, among whom he lived for over two years. Even among natives, ostensibly converted to Orthodox Church, the grip of shamanism in times of incoming danger was very powerful, and Kennan several times witnessed reversion to shamanist practices. He was not a dogmatist, so he did not dismiss the rites as a product of savagery but tried to reflect on what was happening. During the expedition, Kennan acquired high regard for some tribes because of their truthfulness, endurance, and bravery in the permanent struggle against natural forces. Therefore, he tried to grasp their conception of the controlling powers of an extremely harsh environment, ultimately concluding that it was the only religion possible for such men under such circumstances. He went on: "Even a whole century of partial civilization and Christian training cannot wholly counteract the irresistible Shamanistic influence which is exerted upon the mind by the wilder, more terrible manifestations of Nature in these lonely and inhospitable regions. The Kamchadals... were firm believers in the Divine providence, and prayed always night and morning for safety and preservation; yet, when overtaken by a storm in that gloomy range of mountains, the sense of the supernatural overcame their religious convictions, God seemed far away while evil spirits were near and active, and they sacrificed a dog, like very pagans... Man's actions are governed not so much by what he intellectually believes as by what he vividly realizes; and it is this vivid realization of diabolical presence which has given rise to the religion of Shamanism" [1, pp. 204-208].

Undoubtedly, these first influences were important, but they did not affect Kennan's later work more than in a very subtle way. More obvious was the first impression the Russian government and the Russian people made upon a young man. The hospitality demonstrated by the Russians was quite amazing. The members of the expedition were treated like dignitaries wherever they went. On one occasion, Kennan even received a royal reception when a village chief, not understanding the English word "operator", decided it must have meant "imperator" ("emperor") [5, p. 23].

Essential in Kennan's growing love for Russia was his respect for Sergey Abaza, the brother of a minister to the tsar's government. Abaza supported the American during hard times and influenced his opinion of Russia in a favorable way.

Added to that were the feelings that emerged after sudden reuniting with civilization following two years of isolation. Kennan reentered society in the autumn of 1868 in Irkutsk while returning home through European Russia. Irkutsk was the largest city in Siberia, with a population of over twenty thousand. Kennan lately reported that after seeing nothing that even remotely reminded of a city in two years, he and his companion felt "like Gothic barbarians gazing at Rome" [1, p. 464]. During the stay in Irkutsk, Kennan attended the nobility balls and became acquainted with high officials, including Governor-General Shelashnikov and his staff. Having run out of money, he borrowed some from the governor and set out for European Russia. There Kennan was especially mesmerized by

St. Petersburg. One can only imagine what an effect the sights of this city produced upon him coming from the desolate Siberia: "The massive palaces among the Neva; the lavish use of gold and color...; the masked balls; the grand opera; the impressive religious services in the spacious cathedrals of St. Isaac and Kazan; and the all-pervading atmosphere of pride, power, ceremony and wealth; kept us, at first, in a state of almost boyish wonder, excitement and enthusiasm" [5, p. 25]. Kennan then spent the rest of the winter in St. Petersburg, studying Russian, making the round of concerts, balls, and the theatre. Added to what he already experienced, his stay in European Russia solidified his love for this country.

It is also important to stress the question of Kennan's early encounters with the Siberian exile system and the impression that it made on him. Significantly, given the importance of his later views on the subject, there are no references to an encounter with exiles or to a discussion about the exile system in any of his surviving letters or journals, nor did he mention exiles or the exile system in the book about that trip "Tent Life in Siberia". Clearly, Kennan had almost no contact with exiles on his first journey to the Russian Empire and showed very little interest, except retrospectively, in the few casual encounters he might have had with them.

Conclusions. Kennan's first acquaintance with Russia was of seminal importance in shaping his understanding of this country. Born and raised in rural America, having spent almost two years away from civilization, he was indeed impressed by Russian culture and the overpowering greatness of the imperial capital. This admiration was then extrapolated to the country in general. As a result of the expedition, Kennan's outlook became considerably broader. More than that, he had developed a scientific worldview, that later would bring him recognition in the geographical community. In spite of the gained knowledge, Kennan obviously had rather little – if any at all – awareness of the essence of the tsarist regime. The Russian Empire lacked competence to deploy a "soft power" policy deliberately, but its officials already used a somewhat similar approach of generating a positive image of cultural attractiveness, using personal contacts, manipulating the press, and deny-

ing the repressive nature of the Siberian exile system. Apparently, Kennan had got into this trap, too. Back in the U.S., he gave a series of lectures that described Russia in a very positive way. Further trips would make Kennan question and then detest many of the tsarist's policies. This topic may serve as the subject of further historical inquiries. Meanwhile, it can be said that the Russian-American expedition made George Kennan a vigorous defender of the Empire against American and British critics.

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ДЖОРДЖ КЕННАН І РОСІЙСЬКО-АМЕРИКАНСЬКА ТЕЛЕГРАФНА ЕКСПЕДИЦІЯ

Проаналізовано участь Джорджа Кеннана, видатного американського експерта у справах Росії, в експедиції Western Union, яка мала на меті поєднати телеграфним зв'язком США та Російську імперію, ставши таким чином альтернативою ще не реалізованому на той час трансатлантичному проєкту. Експедиція тривала в атмосфері сприятливого політичного клімату та дружніх відносин між двома країнами. Через фінансові труднощі й успішну реалізацію ідеї атлантичного телеграфного кабелю вона була достроково завершена, та попри це вплинула на формування світогляду юного Кеннана, для якого ця зустріч із Росією стала першою. Він провів більше двох років у північно-східному Сибіру, спостерігаючи за життям місцевого населення, після чого переосмислює свої погляди на релігію та науку. Повертаючись додому, Кеннан здійснює подорож європейською частиною імперії, відвідавши, зокрема, Москву та Санкт-Петербург. Столиця справила на нього велике враження. Кеннан був захоплений бурхливим культурним життям Петербурга, почав вивчати російську мову і встановив дружні контакти з багатьма представниками дворянських кіл. Мандрівник повернувся до Сполучених Штатів переконаним русофілом, готовим енергійно та безапеляційно відстоювати свої погляди. На початковому етапі своєї діяльності Кеннан практично не згадував про зустрічі з каторжанами. Зокрема, у травелозі "Життя в сибірській юрті..." він зосередився насамперед на описі Сибіру, його жителів і пейзажів, а також на розповідях про свої пригоди під час телеграфної експедиції. У цілому ці міркування носили яскраво окреслений русофільський характер. Таке осмислення Російської імперії було дуже упередженим і надміру індивідуалізованим продуктом власне кеннанівського досвіду, проте його значення полягало в тому, що воно фактично започаткувало американське бачення Росії на рівні суспільного дискурсу.

Ключові слова: Джордж Кеннан, телеграфна експедиція Western Union, американсько-російські відносини, Сибір, сибірське заслання.