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Announcement

We are thrilled to announce the publication of our first issue of a new and timely journal, *Journal of Russian American Studies*. This peer-reviewed journal will be a great forum for the discussion of Russian-American relations for years to come. We are very excited to publish our first issue which includes three sections, Articles, Book Reviews, and Field Notes. We are accepting manuscripts, books to review, and field notes now for our second issue which will be published in October 2017. We are planning for the theme of that issue to be Americans in the Russian Revolution.

A Plea for Patience: While our stated policies require the Chicago Manual of Style, we are still working on technical issues. Our future issues will be more consistent with this form.

Изучение российско-американских отношений и истории США в постсоветской России

Владимир Викторович Согрин

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Резюме

В статье анализируется состояние исторической американистики в постсоветской России. Наибольшие результаты достигнуты в изучении российско-американских отношений, а также истории американских партий и американской демократии. Однако при этом требует более пристального внимания экономическая и социальная история США. Применительно к исследованию российско-американских отношений XVIII—начала XX веков по-прежнему остается не до конца решенной задача определения их реального места во внешней политике России и США, для чего необходимо интегрировать данную проблематику в более широкий международный контекст. В первую очередь речь идет об изучении отношений США с Великобританией. Ведь именно она в новое время являлась главным объектом внешней политики США, выступая, порой, в роли их партнера, но, преимущественно, конкурента и противника.

Постсоветской исторической американистике не удалось пока переосмыслить наследие советского периода в изучении социальной истории. Советские историки-американисты уделяли преимущественное внимание изучению рабочего движения в США. Они пытались отыскать “социалистический” и “революционный” потенциал американского рабочего класса и объяснить, почему он не был реализован в те или иные исторические эпохи, какие ошибки и просчеты совершали американские коммунисты и социалисты. В действительности на протяжении большей части американской истории конфликт пролетариата и капиталистического класса не играл не только главной, но на многих этапах вообще сколько-нибудь существенной роли. Лишь дважды—на рубеже XIX–XX вв. и 1930-е гг.—он выходил на ведущее место в социальных взаимоотношениях, приобретая радикальный, хотя и не антагонистический характер. Во все же иные эпохи истории США основ-

ное социальное напряжение создавалось иными силами, изучению которых отечественные американисты до сих пор не уделили должного внимания.

The article analyzes the state of historical *Amerikanistika* in Post-Soviet Russia. The best results have been achieved in the study of Russian-American relations as well as the history of the US parties and the US democracy. Serious deficiencies remain in the study of economic and social history. In the study of foreign relations of the 18th–early 20th centuries more attention must be paid to the real place of Russian-American relations in the foreign policy of both Russia and the United States. First and foremost we are talking about the U.S.–Great Britain relations.

Shortcomings in the study of social history, that was typical for the Soviet historiography, have not been overcome. The Soviet historians paid groundless attention to the study of the US labor movement in order to find the “socialist” and “revolutionary” potential of the American working class and to answer the questions why this potential has not been implemented in different historical periods and what mistakes and miscalculations have been made by the American Communists and socialists. In fact throughout the most part of the US history the conflict between the proletariat and the capitalist class did not play any significant role. Only twice—at the turn of the 19th–20th centuries and at the 1930s—this conflict was in the focus of the social relations in the United States. But even then this conflict did not have the antagonistic character. In other epochs of the US history the main social tensions in the USA have been created by other social forces and groups. These social divisions are waiting for more attention of the post-Soviet historical *Amerikanistika*.

Ключевые слова: историческая американистика в постсоветской России, российско-американские отношения, внешняя политика США, история демократии и партий, социальная и экономическая история США

Keywords: the historical *Amerikanistika* in Post-Soviet Russia, Russian-American relations, the U.S. foreign policy, the history of democracy and political parties, the social and economic history of the US.

Отечественная историческая американистика¹, являвшаяся в советский период одной из ведущих научных дисциплин, переживает в постсоветский период нелегкие времена. С одной стороны, она, как и другие гуманитарные дисциплины, обрела академическую свободу и развивалась в режиме научного плюрализма. С другой стороны, она испытала сокращение государственного финансирования, повлекшего серьезное уменьшение как численности самих историков-американистов, так и количества публикуемых

¹ Современное развитие США изучается также политологами, социологами, экономистами, представителями других дисциплин. Это требует самостоятельного анализа. Библиография работ по истории США регулярно публикуется в «Американском ежегоднике».

научных работ. Освободившись от директивных указаний КПСС по поводу истинного характера американского капитализма, его внутренней и внешней политики, она не смогла обрести полную независимость от российских политических перипетий.

Весомым было влияние Перестройки. М.С. Горбачев, поставивший целью соединить социализм с рынком и демократией, обозначил последние как *общечеловеческие ценности*. Выдвижение М.С. Горбачевым концепции *общечеловеческих ценностей* означало признание стран, где существовали рынок, демократия, права человека, гражданское общество, побратимами реформируемого СССР. Так США из врага № 1 превратились в друга СССР. Вызов Горбачеву бросили радикальные реформаторы, которые потребовали не конвергенции социализма и капитализма, а полного отказа от социализма и принятия западной модели в чистом виде. Эти политики, главным лидером которых с 1990 г. выступил Б.Н. Ельцин, завоевывали нарастающую поддержку в массах. В 1991 г., открыто выступив против коммунизма, вооружившись западными, а, следовательно, и американскими ценностями, Ельцин и его команда одержали победу на президентских выборах в России, подавили августовский реставрационный путч, способствовали смене СССР Содружеством Независимых государств.

Политические перипетии оказали непосредственное влияние на отечественную американистику. Многие американисты поменяли прежние *минусы* в восприятии и освещении США на *плюсы*. Начиная со второй половины 1980-х гг. наблюдался настоящий бум в переводе и издании на русском языке работ западных, в первую очередь, американских политологов, социологов, экономистов, историков. Среди историков доминировали те, кого в советский период зачисляли в консервативную школу (или школу консенсуса) и либеральную школу. В течение одного десятилетия количество их работ, переведенных на русский язык, значительно превзошло количество книг американских «левых» историков, изданных в СССР в течение предшествующих 70 лет.

Однако после достижения российско-американского «сердечного соглашения» в России как в силу внутренней повестки дня, так и внешнеполитических коллизий, отчетливо проявилось разочарование в либерально-демократических идеалах, которое распространилось на их главного носителя — Соединенные Штаты. Среди причин изменения отношения к Соединенным Штатам важное место заняло разочарование в результатах радикальных рыночных реформ, распространившееся на западную цивилизацию, и особенно на США, покровительствовавших Б.Н. Ельцину и его преобразованиям. В России стало восстанавливаться негативное отношение к американской цивилизации. На современном этапе критическое отношение к США проявилось наиболее полно. Антиамериканизм стал пропагандистским дискурсом, призванным спланировать россиянам вокруг власти.²

² О логике и динамике развития постсоветской американистики также см.: Ivan I. Kurilla, Victoria I. Zhuravleva, "Teaching U.S. History in Russia: Issues, Challenges, and Prospects," *The Journal of American History*, March (2010): 1138-1144.

Многие из них оказались восприимчивы к антиамериканизму, который стал пропагандироваться и некоторыми известными историками. Например, член-корреспондент РАН А.Н. Сахаров всерьез рассуждает о том, что Россия в 1905 г. могла рассчитывать на победу в войне с Японией. А ее проигрыш был результатом происков США, вынудивших Россию пойти «на уступку Японии Курил и Южного Сахалина»³. В действительности, как это давно показано и в американской, и в российской исторической литературе, США и их президент Т. Рузвельт, выступившие с согласия как Японии, так и России арбитром на Портсмутских переговорах в 1905 г., исповедовали концепцию баланса сил. Именно по этой причине они, требуя уступок от потерпевшей поражение России, стремились сдержать (и сумели это сделать) чрезмерные притязания Японии. Тезис А.Н. Сахарова о том, что США в 1905 г. продемонстрировали «еще раз, кто является истинным дирижером событий на Дальнем Востоке», антиисторичен. Дело в том, что в тот период, а, тем более, ранее, США по своему влиянию в мире и на Дальнем Востоке уступали всем ведущим европейским державам—Англии, Германии, Франции—и из-за позиции последних не сумели воплотить в жизнь своих стратегических установок, в первую очередь, доктрины «открытых дверей». Отмечу также, что А.Н. Сахаров «упустил из виду», что Курилы с 1875 г. принадлежали Японии и уступать их не требовалось.

В начале XXI века в историко-пропагандистском дискурсе получил распространение миф о том, что продажа Аляски Соединенным Штатам в 1867 г. была предательством национальных интересов России. И.Б. Миронов в диссертации 2011 г. категорически отверг традиционные выводы отечественных историков о том, что продажа в 1867 г. Аляски была обусловлена объективными экономическими и политическими интересами России. Восприняв конспирологическую и откровенно антиамериканскую идеологию, он приписывает продажу Аляски заговору американских агентов влияния в России: «Продаже Аляски предшествовала многолетняя деятельность узкой группы высших государственных сановников в правительстве Российской империи, целью которых было создание искусственных предпосылок уступки российских заокеанских территорий Соединенным Штатам Америки...»⁴. Фактически согласно этой конспирологической идее в ряды врагов России и американских агентов попали император Александр II и знаменитый министр иностранных дел А.М. Горчаков. На самом деле Россия продала Аляску в силу объективных причин. Она потерпела сокрушительное поражение в Крымской войне от Англии и Франции, крайне нуждалась в деньгах, а Аляска приносила ей убытки. Россия уступила Аляску за 7,2 млн. долл., при этом американские сенаторы упорно не хотели ратифицировать

³ Сахаров А.Н. Правда о неоконченной войне. Позорный проигрыш русско-японской войны 1905 года не более чем исторический миф // Российская газета. 13 ноября 2006.

⁴ Миронов И.Б. Политика правительства Российской империи в освоении и ликвидации северо-американских колоний (1799-1867 гг.). Автореферат диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата исторических наук. Воронеж, 2011. С. 14.

соглашение о покупке «морозильника», как они называли Аляску, и российскому послу в США пришлось лоббировать ее продажу при помощи щедрых взяток законодателям Соединенных Штатов.

В антиамериканском пропагандистском дискурсе, присутствующем в современной России, признание гегемонистского характера внешней политики США активно используется для дискредитации ценностей демократии и либерализма. В конце 2013 г. в передачах центрального российского телеканала, посвященных Первой мировой войне, известный публичный историк Н.А. Нарочницкая доказывала, что США, вступив в войну, ставили целью утвердить господство над миром, ликвидировать не только Германскую империю, но и православную российскую монархию. Такая оценка не только фальсифицировала роль США в мировой войне, но и объявляла демократию, покусившуюся, как и большевизм, на православную монархию, безусловным злом.

К сожалению, научное сообщество российских американистов, приверженное профессиональному освещению истории, не смогло в постсоветский период оказывать столь же реальное влияние на публичную сферу, как это было в период «холодной войны».

В постсоветский период происходили серьезные институциональные изменения в российской американистике, которые расширяли ее географию. Некоторые центры ослабили свою деятельность, другие исчезли, но их место заняли новые центры, причем они, преимущественно, возникли вне Москвы. Их особенность заключалась в том, что в условиях сокращения исторического образования они создавались при междисциплинарных кафедрах (например, международных отношений, политологии и истории), но историческая тематика в исследованиях ученых этих центров преобладала. В 2009 г., когда была создана Российская ассоциация историков-американистов, в нее вошли практически все представители региональных центров американистики. В настоящее время наиболее активно развиваются центры исторической американистики в Санкт-Петербургском, Нижегородском, Волгоградском, Тамбовском, Томском, Курском государственных университетах, а также в Вятском государственном гуманитарном университете. Большинство их сотрудников специализируются в изучении внешней политики США. В жизни российского научного сообщества принимают активное участие американисты Самарского и Саратовского государственных университетов. «Старые» центры исторической американистики сохраняют активность в Институте всеобщей истории РАН, Санкт-Петербургском институте истории РАН, на кафедре новой и новейшей истории Московского государственного университета, в Московском институте международных отношений. Новым, динамично развивающимся столичным центром американистики стал в постсоветский период Российский государственный гуманитарный университет⁵.

⁵ Подробнее о деятельности этих центров исторической американистики см.: Американский ежегодник 2008/2009. Ответственный редактор В.В. Согрин. М., 2010. С. 201-311.

Историческая американистика исследует разнообразные темы истории США, но наибольшая творческая активность в постсоветский период была присуща такому традиционно сильному исследовательскому направлению, как изучение истории российско-американских и советско-американских отношений. В 1997–1999 гг. было опубликовано фундаментальное трехтомное исследование «История русской Америки» под редакцией академика Н.Н. Болховитинова⁶, получившее заслуженное признание в России и США и высокие оценки научного сообщества по обе стороны Атлантики. Этот труд в совокупности с монографиями советского периода Н.Н. Болховитинова⁷, Г.П. Куропятника⁸, как и рядом новейших исследований, среди которых следует выделить книгу И.И. Куриллы⁹, практически исчерпывают возможность изучения истории российско-американских отношений XIX века «вширь».¹⁰

Что касается возможностей их изучения «вглубь», то, отнюдь не умаляя значения названных фундаментальных трудов, следует обратить внимание на необходимость дальнейшего изучения роли российско-американских отношений во внешней политике как России, так и США в сравнительном международном контексте. А это невозможно без исследований российскими историками внешнеполитических отношений США с другими европейскими державами. В первую очередь речь идет об изучении отношений США с Великобританией, которая в новое время являлась, преимущественно, конкурентом и даже противником США, будучи основным объектом их внимания¹¹. Другим важным направлением внешней политики США, исследование которого следует расширять и углублять, остаются отношения с Латинской Америкой.

⁶ История русской Америки, 1732–1867 / Под общей редакцией академика Н.Н. Болховитинова. Т. 1. Основание русской Америки, 1732–1799. М.: Международные отношения, 1997; Т.2. Деятельность российско-американской компании 1799–1825. М.: Международные отношения, 1999; Т.3. Русская Америка: от зенита к закату, 1825–1867. М.: Международные отношения, 1999.

⁷ Болховитинов Н.Н. Русско-американские отношения, 1815–1832. М.: Наука, 1975; Болховитиной Н.Н. Русско-американские отношения и продажа Аляски. 1834–1867. М.: Наука, 1990; Болоховитинов Н.Н. Россия открывает Америку, 1732–1799. М.: Международные отношения, 1991.

⁸ Куропятник Г.П. Россия и США: экономические, культурные и дипломатические связи, 1867–1881. М.: Наука, 1981.

⁹ Курилла И.И. Заокеанские партнеры: Америка и Россия в 1830–1850-е годы. Волгоград: Изд-во ВолГУ, 2005.

¹⁰ На современном этапе российские авторы уделяют основное внимание истории Русской Америки. Возникло несколько центров изучения данной тематики. Об этом см.: Петров А.Ю. Региональные отечественные научные центры по изучению истории Русской Америки и колонизации северной части Тихого океана // Американский ежегодник 2008/2009. М., 2010. С. 300–311.

¹¹ Монографию А.И. Кубышкина «Англо-американское соперничество в Центральной Америке в XIX—начале XX в.» (Саратов: Издательство Саратовского университета, 1994) можно считать исключением из общего правила.

Без изучения данной проблематики невозможно объективно оценить значение российско-американских отношений во внешней политике США нового времени¹². Отметим, что развитию сбалансированного подхода к этой теме способствовали два коллективных труда по истории внешней политики США нового времени, изданных под руководством Н.Н. Болховитинова и Г.П. Куропятника Центром североамериканских исследований Института всеобщей истории РАН в 1990-е годы¹³. В этих трудах история российско-американских отношений была вписана в широкий контекст внешней политики США в целом.

На современном этапе российские американисты стали уделять особое внимание теме взаимовосприятия в контексте российско-американских отношений. Среди работ, посвященных данной проблематике, особое место занимает фундаментальная монография В.И. Журавлевой, посвященная восприятию американским обществом России в 1881–1914 гг. Автор выходит за указанные хронологические рамки в заключительной части (где повествование охватывает период Первой мировой войны) и в эпилоге (где проводятся параллели между двумя переходными периодами—рубеж XIX–XX вв. и рубеж XX–XXI вв.). В.И. Журавлева овладела методологией *имагологического исследования*. Это полидисциплинарное направление, использующее наряду с историческими методами социального конструктивизма, культурологии, этнопсихологии, нацелено на изучение взаимовосприятия в корреляции с процессом формирования национальной идентичности. Применительно к исследуемому периоду В.И. Журавлева выделила четыре дискурса, обусловленных текстом о России: «либерально-универсалистский, консервативно-пессимистический, русофильский и радикальный, с характерным для них восприятием методов и перспектив модернизации России, природы национального характера русских, репертуарами смыслов, дихотомиями и мифами». Исследовательница пришла к выводу, что «в итоге русским в американской интеллектуальной традиции и массовом сознании не было позволено остаться другими, как, например, китайцам, поскольку русский

¹² В последние годы наметились определенные позитивные сдвиги в изучении указанной проблематики, поскольку были защищены докторские диссертации и опубликованы монографии, посвященные мало изученным в советский период аспектам внешнеполитической истории США нового времени. См., например: Краснов Н.А. США и Франция: дипломатические отношения, 1775–1801. М.: ПАИМС, 2000; Акимов Ю.Г. От межколониальных конфликтов к битве империй: англо-французское соперничество в Северной Америке в 1613–1713 гг. СПб.: Издательство Санкт-Петербургского университета, 2002. Следует также упомянуть монографии, посвященные внешней политике США первых десятилетий независимости: Трояновская М.О. Дискуссии по вопросам внешней политики США (1775–1823). М.: Издательство «Весь Мир», 2010; Исэров А.А. США и борьба Латинской Америки за независимость. М.: Русский Фонд Содействия Образованию и Науке, 2011.

¹³ История внешней политики и дипломатии США. 1775–1877 / Ответственный редактор Н.Н. Болховитинов. М.: Международные отношения, 1994; История внешней политики и дипломатии США 1867–1918 / Ответственный редактор Г.П. Куропятник. М.: Наука, 1997.

«Другой» превратился в конституирующего, что приводило к формированию долгосрочных трендов восприятия России в США, сохранивших свое значение вплоть до настоящего времени»¹⁴.

В свою очередь, В.В. Согрин проанализировал восприятие США в постсоветской России¹⁵. В 2013 г. Институт всеобщей истории Российской академии наук провел конференцию «Меняющееся восприятие России в США. Меняющееся восприятие США в России. 1933-2013» с участием историков США¹⁶.

Особым направлением изучения российско-американских отношений в постсоветский период стало исследование истории американистики в России и русистики в США в сравнительном контексте, инициированное двумя российскими историками-американистами В.И. Журавлевой и И.И. Куриллой. Под их совместной редакцией вышло две коллективных монографии, в которых представлены тексты российских и американских исследователей, нацеленные на понимание того, как происходил процесс взаимного изучения американцами и русскими друг друга в длительном временном диапазоне, какие факторы оказывали влияние на его институционализацию и содержательное наполнение, и к каким результатам это приводило¹⁷. Без понимания того, что мешало в прошлом и продолжает мешать в настоящем изучению и пониманию другой страны и другого народа невозможно преодолеть современный кризис в российско-американских отношениях.

Среди работ отечественных американистов, посвященных истории советско-американских отношений, следует обратить особое внимание на труды академика Г.Н. Севостьянова по истории советско-американских дипломатических отношений межвоенного периода¹⁸ и профессора В.О. Печатнова

¹⁴ Журавлева В.И. Понимание России в США: образы и мифы. 1881-1914. М.: РГУ, 2012. С. 1014-1029.

¹⁵ См., например: Vladimir V. Sogrin, "The Changing Perceptions of the USA in the Post-Soviet Russia," *Social Sciences*, N2 (2014): 78-91.

¹⁶ См. публикацию: Восприятие США в России. Восприятие России в США / Редколлегия: Согрин В.В., Лаврентьева Т.Ю., Исэров А.А. // Электронный научно-образовательный журнал «История». 2014 (30). N 7.

¹⁷ Россия и США на страницах учебников: опыт взаимных репрезентаций / Под редакцией В.И. Журавлевой, И.И. Куриллы. Волгоград: Издательство ВолГУ, 2009; *Russian/Soviet Studies in the United States, Ameriksnistika in Russia: Mutual Representations in Academic Pro-jects*. Ivan Kurilla and Victoria I. Zhuravleva, eds. New York: Lexington Books, 2016. В это же направление вписывается вышедший в Санкт-Петербурге сборник статей, посвященный памяти А.А. Фурсенко—одного из мэтров отечественной американистики: Россия и США: познавая друг друга. Сборник памяти академика Александра Александровича Фурсенко. Под редакцией В.В. Носкова. Санкт-Петербург: Нестор-История, 2015.

¹⁸ Севостьянов Г.Н. Европейский кризис и позиция США, 1938-1939. М.: Наука, 1992; Севостьянов Г.Н. Москва-Вашингтон. Дипломатические отношения. 1933-1936. М.: Наука, 2002. Под редакцией Г.Н. Севостьянова была подготовлена многотомная публикация архивных документов по истории взаимоотношений США и России в XX в. (доведена до 1952 г.), сборник документов по экономическим связям двух стран, а также трехтомный сборник документов "Москва-Вашингтон. Политика и дипломатия Кремля" (2009).

об отношениях СССР и США в 1940-е гг.¹⁹. Фундаментальной монографии последнего присуще преодоление одностороннего подхода, характерного в освещении этой темы как для отечественных исследователей советского периода, так и для ряда авторов постсоветского этапа. В.О.Печатнов впервые столь разносторонне, полно, объективно, основываясь на максимально возможном использовании архивных материалов обеих стран раскрывает «позитивные» и «негативные» аспекты дипломатических стратегий и практик обеих великих держав.

Важным вкладом в изучение российско-американского диалога культур стала научно-популярная монография Э.А. Иваняна, на страницах которой он выступает и как историк и как очевидец и активный участник описываемых событий. Книга охватывает двухвековую историю культурных связей России и США и обращает внимание на малоизвестные страницы истории двусторонних отношений, которые достойны внимания исследователей по обе стороны Атлантики²⁰.

В свою очередь, ведущий специалист по истории американского бизнеса в России Б.М. Шпотов посвятил свою последнюю монографию изучению феномена делового сотрудничества СССР и США на этапе построения материально-технической базы социализма, завершив тем самым серию публикаций по советско-американским экономическим связям. На основе архивных материалов и опубликованных источников американского и русского происхождения автор представил «американский вектор» сталинской экономической политики. Этот аспект внешних экономических связей СССР замалчивался в послевоенной советской историографии по идеологическим мотивам²¹.

Ряд оригинальных исследований постсоветской американистики нацелен на изучение проблем внешней политики США эпохи мировых войн и межвоенного периода²². В докторских диссертациях В.В. Романова и В.Т.

¹⁹ Печатнов В.О. Сталин, Рузвельт, Трумэн: СССР и США в 1940-х гг. М.: ТЕРРА Книжный клуб, 2006. В 2012 г. В.О. Печатновым совместно с А.С. Манькиным издан первый в постсоветской России учебник по истории внешней политики США.— Печатнов В.О., Манькин А.С. История внешней политики США. М.: Печатнов В.О., Манькин А.С. История внешней политики США. М., 2012.

²⁰ Иванян Э.А. Когда говорят музы. История российско-американских культурных связей. М.: Международная жизнь, 2007. Перу Э.А. Иваняна также принадлежит первый постсоветский учебник и хрестоматия по истории США и «Энциклопедия российско-американских отношений XVIII–XX века» (2001).

²¹ Шпотов Б.М. Американский бизнес и Советский Союз в 1920–1930-е годы. Лабиринты экономического сотрудничества. М.: Книжный дом «ЛИБРОКОМ», 2013. Предшествующая монография исследователя была посвящена Генри Форду и явлению «фордизма»: Шпотов Б.М. Генри Форд. Жизнь и бизнес. М.: КДУ, 2003.

²² Егорова Н.И. Изоляционизм и европейская политика США, 1933–1941. М.: Российская академия наук, Ин-т всеобщей истории, 1995; Мягков М.Ю. Проблема послевоенного устройства Европы в американо-советских отношениях 1941–1945. М.: Институт всеобщей истории РАН, 2006; Листиков С.В. США и революционная Россия в 1917 году. К вопросу об альтернативах американской политики от Февраля к Октябрю. М.: Издательство «Наука», 2006; Встречными курсами: политика СССР

Юнгблуда преодолены тенденциозные интерпретации внешней политики (особенно ее идеологических аспектов) В. Вильсона и Ф.Д. Рузвельта. В советский период оценки деятельности В. Вильсона носили резко негативный характер, а его взгляды искажались²³. В постсоветский период односторонность оценок стала преодолеваться, что нашло, прежде всего, отражение в монографии В.В. Романова²⁴. Вместе с тем, в его сбалансированной оценке внешнеполитической стратегии Вильсона ограниченность последней и ее подчиненность национальным интересам США остались, на мой взгляд, не в полной мере проясненными. В фундаментальном исследовании В.Т. Юнгблуда раскрыты реальные различия, основные положения и нюансы внешнеполитических позиций разных групп американского политического класса эпохи Второй мировой войны. Его монография помогает лучше понять, какие трудности пришлось преодолевать Рузвельту и его сторонникам в создании и поддержании альянса с антагонистической для многих американцев социалистической страной²⁵.

Примечательной тенденцией постсоветского периода стало появление исследований по внешней политике США, в которых пристальное внимание уделяется ее цивилизационным и социокультурным основаниям. Речь идет, прежде всего, о монографиях В.Л. Малькова, в которых мессианизм назван одной из устойчивых тенденций как американской, так и российской внешней политики²⁶. В монографии В.В. Согрина «США в XX–XXI веках. Либерализм. Демократия. Империя»²⁷ важное место уделено этапам и тенденциям советско-американских отношений. Автор доказывает, что в период до Второй мировой войны главной сдерживающей силой советского коммунизма были не США, а европейские демократии, в первую очередь, Великобритания. Конфликт СССР и США вышел на ведущую позицию после Второй мировой войны. Автор возлагает ответственность за «холодную

и США на Балканах, Ближнем и Среднем Востоке в 1939–1945 гг. / Ответственный редактор В.Т. Юнгблуд. Киров: ВятГГУ, 2014.

²³ Примером могут служить оценки А.Н. Яковлева, высказанные в монографии 1984 г., вобравшей материалы его кандидатской и докторской диссертаций. В частности, утверждалось, что вильсоновские «пресловутые 14 пунктов» ставили целью передать европейские колонии под «управление США» (Яковлев А.Н. От Трумэна до Рейгана: доктрины и реальности ядерного века. М.: Молодая гвардия, 1984. С. 6). В действительности Вильсон отстаивал идею ликвидации всех колоний. Через два года после выхода книги А.Н. Яковлев стал одним из главных идеологов горбачевской Перестройки, и его оценки американского опыта сменились с отрицательно уничижительных на сугубо позитивные.

²⁴ Романов В.В. В поисках нового миропорядка: внешнеполитическая мысль США (1913–1921). Москва–Тамбов: Издательство ТГУ, 2005.

²⁵ Юнгблуд В.Т. Внешнеполитическая мысль США 1939–1945 годов. Киров: Издательство ВГПУ, 1998.

²⁶ Мальков В.Л. Путь к имперству. Америка в первой половине XX века. М.: Наука, 2004; Мальков В.Л. Россия и США в XX веке. Очерки истории межгосударственных отношений и дипломатии в социокультурном контексте. М.: Наука, 2009.

²⁷ Согрин В.В. США в XX–XXI веках. Либерализм. Демократия. Империя. М.: Издательство «Весь Мир», 2015.

войну” на обе сверхдержавы и показывает, что неудачный для СССР ее исход был обусловлен, в первую очередь, внутренними пороками советского социализма, обрекавшими реальный социализм на растущее отставание от либерального капитализма²⁸.

Для отечественных американистов, обращающихся к тематике внешней политики Соединенных Штатов при выборе собственной исследовательской темы, характерен поиск сюжетов, которые прежде не рассматривались. Но из поля зрения отечественных американистов в результате выпадают вопросы, которые формально уже изучались, но при этом требующие нового всестороннего изучения и осмысления в изменившейся в постсоветский период историографической ситуации. Тем более, что на современном этапе на русский язык переводятся труды иностранных авторов (при этом не только американских), содержащие принципиально отличные оценки тех или иных аспектов внешней политики США и бросающие реальный научный вызов отечественным американистам.

Приведу в связи с этим лишь один пример. В работе по истории Англии британского автора, переведенной на русский язык, утверждается: «И в Первой и во Второй мировых войнах решающую роль сыграло участие Соединенных Штатов, что, в свою очередь, привело к установлению нового миропорядка»²⁹. Такая оценка противоречит утвердившимся в российской историографии схемам, но с учетом того, что она типична для западной историографии, став в ней общим местом, ее можно трактовать как своеобразный исследовательский вызов. На мой взгляд, это положение требует нового непредвзятого анализа. Ведь невозможно игнорировать тот факт, что после вступления США в Первую мировую войну в апреле 1917 г. положение на Западном фронте стало меняться и что даже после выхода из войны России весной 1918 г. и укрепления в результате позиций Германии на Западном фронте, Германская империя уже через полгода потерпела сокрушительное поражение и в ноябре подписала акт о капитуляции. Очевидно, что вступление США в войну имело прямое отношение к такому повороту событий, но какой была реальная мера американского влияния? Этот вопрос для отечественной американистики остается актуальным. Что касается Вто-

²⁸ Следует также обратить внимание на следующие монографии по истории советско-американских отношений в период “холодной войны”: Батюк В.В., Евстафьев Д. Первые заморозки. Советско-американские отношения в 1945–1950 гг. М.: Российский научный фонд, 1995; Холодная война. 1945–1963 гг. Историческая ретроспектива / Ответ. ред. Н.И. Егорова, А.О. Чубарьян. М.: ОЛМА-ПРЕСС, 2003; Богатуров А.Д. Великие державы на Тихом океане. История и теория международных отношений в Восточной Азии после второй мировой войны (1945–1995). М.: Конверт–МОНФ, 1997; Гайдук И.В. В лабиринтах холодной войны: СССР и США в ООН, 1945–1965 гг. М.: ИВИ РАН, 2012; О российской историографии “холодной войны” подробнее см.: Зубок В.М., Печатнов В.О. Отечественная историография «холодной войны»: некоторые итоги десятилетия // Отечественная история. 2003. № 4–5.

²⁹ Иглз Р. История Англии. Подробный справочник по истории. М.: АСТ: Астрель, 2010. С.238.

рой мировой войны, то даже те западные авторы, которые признают решающий вклад СССР в победу над гитлеровской Германией, подчас доказывают, что без материальной помощи США Советский Союз не смог бы одержать такой победы. Российской американистике еще предстоит отразить этот тезис с учетом современных исследовательских практик.

Рассмотрим теперь состояние изучения отечественной американистикой политической, экономической и социальной истории США. Внутривнутриполитическая история США в постсоветский период исследовалась по-прежнему достаточно активно. Прежде всего, необходимо отметить сохранение интереса к изучению истории политических партий³⁰, которая и в советский период находилась в центре внимания исследователей³¹. Появились обобщающие работы по американской политической истории и истории демократии в США³². В них выделены исторические этапы американской политической власти и демократии, проанализированы основные факторы, оказывавшие влияние на характер политической власти: демократия, плюрализм, элиты, их соотношение на разных этапах.

На фоне активного изучения отечественными американистами истории внешней и внутренней политики США исследование экономической и социальной истории выглядит неудовлетворительным. Остаются непреодоленными недостатки советской историографии социальной истории США,

³⁰ См. напр.: Байбакова Л.В. Двухпартийная система в период вступления США в индустриальное общество (последняя треть XIX в.). М.: МАКС Пресс, 2002; Лапшина И.К. Разделенное правление в США. М.: Российская политическая энциклопедия (РОССПЭН), 2008; Печатнов В.О. От Джефферсона до Клинтона. Демократическая партия США в борьбе за избирателя. М.: Наука, 2008.

³¹ В связи с этим необходимо, в первую очередь, отметить научную деятельность лаборатории американистики Исторического факультета МГУ. Созданная во второй половине 1970-х гг. профессором Н.В.Сивачевым, она сосредоточилась на изучении истории двухпартийной системы США. В то время советским идеологическим клише было—«две партии, одна политика». То есть различия между двумя главными партиями США не просто умаялись, а отрицались. Научный коллектив под руководством Н.В.Сивачева, в который вошли не только американисты МГУ, но и специалисты из других академических центров, с самого начала опирался на совершенно иной подход: участникам двухпартийной системы США на всех исторических этапах был присущ, с одной стороны, консенсус в отношении американских первооснов, а с другой стороны, альтернативность в понимании способов упрочения, совершенствования, а порой и спасения цивилизации США. Этим коллективом были подготовлены десятки научных трудов, в которых раскрывалось наличие если не всех, то очень многих различий между двумя ведущими партиями на всех этапах американской истории. Об итогах деятельности коллектива см.: Манькин А.С., Никонов В.А., Рогулев Ю.Н., Язьков Е.Ф. Некоторые итоги изучения истории двухпартийной системы США // Новая и новейшая история. 1988. № 2. С. 43-68; Галкин И.В., Манькин А.С., Печатнов В.О. Двухпартийная система в политической истории США // Вопросы истории. 1987. № 9. С.54-71.

³² Согрин В.В. Политическая история США. XVII—XX вв. М.: Издательство «Весь Мир», 2001; Согрин В.В. Демократия в США. От колониальной эры до XXI века. М.: Издательство «Весь Мир», 2011.

о которых следует сказать отдельно. Во-первых, непропорционально большое число исследований по социальной истории было посвящено рабочему движению в США. Во-вторых, его изучение подчинялось идеологическим установкам и стереотипам и было нацелено на выявление радикального и социалистического потенциала американского рабочего класса и поиск объяснений, почему этот потенциал не реализовывался в те или иные эпохи, какие ошибки и просчеты совершали американские коммунисты и социалисты, призванные возглавить пролетариат в борьбе против капитализма. Научная уязвимость подобного подхода, как и основанных на нем исследований американского пролетариата и буржуазии, в целом *социальной истории*, представляются очевидными. В течение четырех вековой американской истории этот конфликт только дважды — рубеж XIX–XX вв. и 1930-е гг. — выходил на ведущее место в социальных взаимоотношениях Соединенных Штатов, приобретал радикальный, хотя и не антагонистический характер. Во все же иные эпохи американской истории основное социальное напряжение в США создавалось иными социальными силами, которые отечественным американистам предстоит еще изучить.

Особого внимания заслуживает история корпоративного капитала, ставшего с последней трети XIX века основой американского бизнеса и остающегося ею поныне. Корпорации, пустившие корни в первые десятилетия независимости, увеличились количественно и изменились качественно во второй четверти XIX в. Тогда, по определению американских историков, началась «корпоративная революция», завершившаяся уже на рубеже XIX–XX вв. Этот американский феномен, оказавший в последующем большое воздействие на другие страны, долгое время характеризовался российскими американистами исключительно негативно. Как отмечал российский историк А.А. Кредер, «в отечественной литературе предпринимательские корпорации изначально ассоциировались с монополиями, что предопределило разоблачительный характер многочисленных публикаций на эту тему»³³. Но в действительности деятельность корпораций имела не только негативные стороны, но и способствовала экономическому подъему США. Так, изменилась в направлении демократизации законодательная практика учреждения корпораций. По справедливому замечанию А.А. Кредера, подобные демократические изменения в корпоративном праве были результатом общественных процессов, связанных с реформами Э.Джексона и его сторонников. Корпоративное право было приведено в соответствие с набиравшими силу лозунгами «равенства возможностей» и «невмешательства государства», а также эгалитарным менталитетом масс американцев.

До Гражданской войны корпоративный капитал по удельному весу еще уступал индивидуальному и партнерскому. Ситуация радикально изменилась после окончания Гражданской войны, когда корпорации в течение трех десятилетий заняли ведущую позицию в национальной экономике, при этом качественно изменились сами, трансформировавшись в крупные предпри-

³³ Кредер А.А. Американская предпринимательская корпорация: первое столетие истории // Американский ежегодник. М., 1994. С. 54.

нимательские объединения. Именно эти процессы, с точки зрения советских историков, привели к краху свободной конкуренции, торжеству монополистического капитализма, подчинению ему политической власти, вступлению капиталистической общественно-политической формации в «высшую» и одновременно его последнюю историческую стадию. В постсоветский период такие выводы перестали использоваться, но и всеобъемлющего научного ответа на вопрос, в чем же заключались основополагающие черты обновившейся капиталистической системы, не последовало. История корпораций должна быть разделена на периоды, и каждый исследован отдельно.

Социальные конфликты XIX в. не исчерпывались коллизиями труда и капитала, более того, иные социальные конфликты на большинстве этапов (за исключением конца XIX - начала XX в.) имели реально большее значение. Их история заслуживает пристального изучения с современных исследовательских позиций. Особого внимания заслуживает история средних и мелкособственнических слоев американского общества, расово-этнических групп и конфликтов, гендерной проблематике, которая вышла на ведущее место в современной исторической науке США. Еще ждет своих исследователей история различных религиозных деноминаций и религиозных конфликтов. В советский период отечественные историки за редким исключением отводили им очень скромное место в истории XIX в., поскольку в соответствии с классовым подходом религиозным отношениям принадлежала периферийная роль по сравнению с конфликтом между трудом и капиталом.

Экономическая и социальная история США новейшего времени распадается на несколько этапов. Первый среди этих этапов—между двумя мировыми войнами—разделяется на “десятилетие процветания” (1920-е годы) и период Нового курса Ф.Д. Рузвельта. В историческом сознании американцев, как и в исторической литературе США, 1920-е гг. традиционно обозначаются как десятилетие процветания (просперити). Исследователи обнаруживают в том десятилетии ростки *общества потребления, массовой культуры*, как и другие общественно-исторические феномены, заложившие основу современной Америки. Совсем иначе этот период характеризовался советскими американистами. Они отталкивались от подхода советской исторической науки, трактовавшей основную часть того десятилетия (1923–1929 гг.) как период «временной и частичной стабилизации капитализма». Данная схема распространялась и на США. А ведь 1920-е гг. стали не только одним из самых успешных десятилетий в экономическом росте Соединенных Штатов, но и оказали огромное воздействие на социальное, и особенно, на социокультурное развитие США. Кризис 1929–1933 гг. прервал успешный рост американской экономики, но после того, как кризис был преодолен, матрица общества потребления 1920-х гг. реанимировалась, а вместе с ней возродились социокультурные нормы десятилетия процветания, которые в современных Соединенных Штатах только упрочились. Данным темам отечественная американистика практически не уделяла внимания в советский период. Ничего не изменилось и в постсоветскую эпоху.

Среди экономических проблем Нового курса одной из наиболее дискуссионных являются мероприятия Ф.Д. Рузвельта по преодолению тяже-

лейшего в истории США экономического кризиса 1929–1933 гг. В какой степени все эти мероприятия поспособствовали выходу США из социально-экономического кризиса? В четырехтомном фундаментальном труде отечественных американистов, опубликованном в середине 1980-х гг., содержится положение о том, что Новый курс не смог вывести страну из экономического кризиса, что уровень безработицы в 1939 г. был выше, чем в 1931 г. и “фактически только война спасла капиталистическую экономику США от очередного, может быть, еще более глубокого, кризиса и нового увеличения массовой безработицы”³⁴. Данный вывод, однако, не подтверждается статистическими выкладками о динамике американской экономики в 1930-е гг. (за исключением данных о безработице), как и на протяжении всего рузвельтовского периода. Тема *реальной меры* экономического и социального успеха Нового курса, как и тема развития его тенденций в годы Второй мировой войны заслуживают развернутого исследования отечественными американистами³⁵.

В постсоветский период многие историки восприняли концепцию смены индустриального общества постиндустриальным после окончания Второй мировой войны. Но в научной литературе нет общепринятой концепции этапов становления постиндустриального общества; она слабо разработана в мировой историографии, а в отечественной вообще практически отсутствует. Крайне неудовлетворительный характер имеет изучение социальных трансформаций в американском постиндустриальном обществе. Социальные конфликты, занимавшие центральное место в американском обществе в прежние эпохи, в первую очередь, конфликты между рабочим движением и предпринимателями, а также между крупным бизнесом и мелкими собственниками, были вытеснены конфликтами иной природы, например, расово-этническим и гендерным.

В постсоветский период появились отдельные публикации, посвященные расово-этническим отношениям и конфликтам. Речь идет, прежде всего, об исследованиях Э.Л. Нитобурга и З.В. Чертиной³⁶. Изучением гендерной исторической тематики занимается самарская исследовательница Л.Н. Попкова³⁷. Но указанные проблемы заслуживают более всестороннего и углубленного изучения, как и анализа в широком историческом контексте с учетом исторической ретроспективы и перспективы. Расово-этнические и

³⁴ История США. Тт. 1-4. Отв. Ред. Г.Н. Севостьянов. М.: Наука, 1983–1987. Т. 3. С. 247.

³⁵ Освещение социально-экономической истории США с новых позиций предпринято В.В. Согриным в его обобщающей монографии “Исторический опыт США” (М.: Наука, 2010).

³⁶ Чертина З.С. Плавильный котел? Парадигма этнического развития США. М.: ИВИ РАН, 2000; Нитобург Э.Л. Русские в США: история и судьбы, 1870–1970. М.: Наука, 2005; Нитобург Э.Л. Афроамериканцы США. XX век. М.: Наука, 2009.

³⁷ См., например: Попкова Л. Н. Теория и практика современного феминизма. Женское движение в США // Введение в гендерные исследования. Ч.1. Учебное пособие. / Под редакцией И.А. Жеребкиной. Харьков: ХЦГИ—СПБ: Алетей, 2001. С. 635-663.

гендерные конфликты в последние пятьдесят лет стали главным фактором, объясняющим возникновение в США такого социального феномена как «культурные войны» (точнее было бы назвать их социокультурными—*авт.*). Они раскололи американское общество на две половины, условно говоря, традиционалистов и мультикультуралистов. Этот раскол на современном историческом этапе создает в США магистральную социальную напряженность. Всесторонний анализ генезиса, эволюции и этапов этого нового долговременного конфликта—актуальная задача российской исторической американистики.

Особенность развития постсоветской исторической науки стало ее теоретическое обновление. Ограничусь двумя теоретическими нововведениями, получившими развитие в публикациях автора данной статьи³⁸. Первое нововведение—цивилизационный подход. США относятся к наиболее распространенному типу цивилизаций, обозначаемых как *локальные*. Мною был предложен реестр архетипов и факторов цивилизации США, которые оказались полезны при анализе *долговременных тенденций* американской истории. 1. *Либерально-капиталистический индивидуализм* (был выделен в качестве главного фактора цивилизации США, который оказывал на протяжении всей американской истории огромное, в целом ряде отношений определяющее, воздействие на все сферы общества и доминировал в национальной культуре). 2. *Англо-саксонский архетип* (британские цивилизационные характеристики, перенесенные в Новый Свет). 3. *Равенство возможностей* (укоренившееся в американской ментальности представление о справедливом равенстве). 4. *Гражданское общество и демократия*. 5. *Подвижной фронт* как социокультурный фактор (в XVII–XIX вв. реальная возможность для массы белых американцев “передвигать” границу освоенных восточных земель и заселять огромные незанятые западные территории, обращаясь в независимых собственников; после исчезновения свободных земель—уверенность в том, что каждый индивидуум должен иметь и имеет возможность преодолевать жизненные фронтиры, не бояться «сняться с места», если возможности имущественного или статусного роста исчерпаны или неудовлетворительны). 6. *Массовая иммиграция* как важнейший перманентный фактор формирования и развития американской нации и социума. 7. *Мессианиззм*—убеждение, что США предназначено благодетельствовать своими ценностями все человечество.

Использование цивилизационного подхода не означает утверждение его в качестве единственно научного метода, лишенного каких-либо недостатков и слабостей. В современном теоретическом арсенале все большее место стала занимать *междисциплинарность* (обозначаемая подчас как «полидисциплинарность»), то есть использование при познании прошлого методов различных общественных наук. Отметим, что междисциплинарность развивалась в отечественной исторической науке и в советский период, но тогда она сводилась к использованию методов *марксистского* обществознания.

³⁸ Подробно см.: Согрин В.В. Исторический опыт США. М: Наука, 2010.

В постсоветский период *междисциплинарность* в исторической науке качественно изменилась, поскольку она стала свободно черпать из арсенала современного мирового общественнознания, в первую очередь из таких дисциплин, как культурология, социология, политическая наука, антропология.

Научному развитию американистики будет способствовать углубление *диалога* с историками США. Речь идет именно о *диалоге*, а не о *противоборстве*, которое характеризовало отношение историографий России и США в советский период. Противоборство означает стремление к научной монополии, к дискредитации и устранению оппонента-соперника, а диалог—взаимообмен научными результатами и дискуссии в целях совместного приближения к научной истине, что предполагает восприятие рациональных аргументов оппонентов. В советский период в рамках противоборства отечественные историки исходили из того, что американские исследователи не в состоянии постичь научную истину, поскольку не опираются на марксизм. А историки США были убеждены, что советские авторы обречены на научную неудачу, поскольку скованы марксизмом. *Противоборство*, если воспользоваться терминологией политической науки, это “игра с нулевой суммой”: каждая сторона стремится к абсолютной победе, а оппоненту предназначает полное поражение.

В свою очередь, *диалог*—это научное обогащение каждой стороны за счет убедительных аргументов и неопровержимых фактов оппонента, это приращение общего знания в интересах исторической науки в целом. Необходимо признать, что культура диалога в российской историографии еще далеко не сформирована, у многих историков она отсутствует, но в ее развитии в постсоветский период достигнуты позитивные результаты. После окончания “холодной войны” противоборство с *буржуазной историографией* уступает место *диалогу и дискуссии* со всеми без исключения направлениями и течениями мировой исторической науки, а главным критерием отношения к выводам и концепциям той или иной школы становится их соответствие исторической реальности, а не ценностно—мировоззренческие предпочтения представителей данной школы. Отечественная американистика, как и вся отечественная историческая наука, сохраняя национальные черты, вместе с тем стала все более тесно интегрироваться в мировую историческую науку, что влечет за собой признание и максимальный учет самых разных научных достижений.

Такой подход к зарубежным научным школам, конечно, порождает ряд проблем, прежде неизвестных. И главная из них заключается в том, что зарубежные научные школы часто находятся между собой в конфликтных отношениях. Механистическое, непрофессиональное восприятие их научных результатов может привести к пугающей эклектике. Историческая наука США во все времена была разделена на соперничающие школы. Наличие данной особенности у американской профессиональной историографии, помимо всего прочего, убеждает, что у специалистов из других стран, в том числе у российских американистов, рассматривающих историю США “со стороны”, есть определенные преимущества для формирования непредвзятой научной

позиции. Российские американисты, безусловно, не могут обойтись без достижений американской историографии в собственном постижении истории США, но и американские историки в случае заинтересованности в более глубоком и всестороннем осмыслении исторического опыта США, имеют возможность почерпнуть полезные оценки, заключения, интерпретации из исследований российских ученых.

Примером современной национальной особенности, влияющей на историческую науку США, но чуждой российской американистике, является *политкорректность*—набор мировоззренческих установок, оформившихся в американском обществе (в первую очередь в либеральных кругах, хотя ее не в состоянии проигнорировать и консерваторы) под воздействием общественно-политических процессов и изменений последней трети XX века. В историографии США укоренились “женские” и “афроамериканские” исследования, в университетах появились соответствующие кафедры и учебные курсы. В результате научная картина истории США стала более разнообразной и полной. Но в изучении новой проблематики обнаружились и серьезные перекосы, находящиеся в явном противоречии с принципами историзма. Многие историки в своем исследовательском видении подчинились либеральной политкорректности, которая фактически наложила табу на критические суждения в отношении афроамериканского, равно как и женского движений. Важнейшие события прошлого, такие как Война США за независимость, Гражданская война, Прогрессивная эра начала XX в. и Новый курс 1930-х гг., стали оцениваться не столько в связи с их позитивными нововведениями в сравнении с предшествующими эпохами, сколько в связи с неспособностью обеспечить равные права афроамериканцам, женщинам, как и другим “угнетенным” социальным группам.

Сказанное свидетельствует о том, что у российских американистов есть основания выработать собственную исследовательскую позицию в постижении исторического прошлого США. Эту позицию можно сформулировать следующим образом: раскрывать и исследовать максимально полно самые разнообразные явления и стороны американской истории, все ее “плюсы” и “минусы” и стремиться к поиску их объективного соотношения, *точной меры*. Конечно, понятия “плюсы” и “минусы” американской истории не могут не отразить присутствия у историка определенной мировоззренческой позиции. Если попытаться обозначить мою собственную позицию, то я бы предпочел определение *гуманистический подход*. Улучшение материального положения, условий и качества жизни, свободы не одного или даже нескольких социальных классов и групп, а всех их, равно как и всех членов общества и всего народа—этот критерий присутствует в моем сознании при оценке эволюции любого общества, в том числе и американского. Но, конечно, такой подход в профессиональной исторической работе не может абсолютизироваться, ибо это создает опасность перехода на позицию, схожую с политкорректностью. Наиболее надежным противоядием от этой опасности является историзм—оценка изменений в контексте условий развития страны в конкретный исторический период с учетом того, как и в каком направ-

лении они обновили общество в сравнении с предшествующими этапами истории.

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American Corn in Russia: Lessons of the People-to-People Diplomacy and Capitalism

Victoria I. Zhuravleva

This paper is devoted to the “corn diplomacy” in the context of Russian-American relations from the end of the 19th century to the Cold war period. The author focuses her attention on three cases dealt with the American attempts to export their corn and secrets of corn production to the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. These thematic priorities give her the brilliant opportunity to analyze two dimensions of American messianic feelings determined the stable long-term perception trends of Russia in the American society. The economic one arose from the attractive prospects of exports of goods, capital, and technologies into Russian markets (Russia was supposed to learn “the lessons of American capitalism”). The humanitarian one turned a famished and backward Russia into the object of aid from the rich and prosperous America and the Americans—into “international philanthropists”. At the same time one of the main author’s conclusions is that the “corn diplomacy” played an important role in promoting better understanding between Russian and Americans became the equivalent of the people-to-people diplomacy.

Key words: Russian/Soviet-American relations; “corn diplomacy”, people-to-people diplomacy, images of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union in the United States

In August 2009, the State of Iowa commemorated the 50th anniversary of Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev’s visit to the farm of Roswell Garst, the very man who had offered to teach the Soviet leader how to cultivate hybrid corn varieties that would boost livestock production and provide a plentiful supply of meat for the Soviet people. In those days, the Soviet periodicals were full of effusive articles describing Garst’s innovative method, and whole books were written about his corn-based farming. The man himself was a welcome guest in Kremlin, as he gladly gave lessons in capitalist agricultural production and acted as a people’s diplomat in the middle of the Cold War.

Yet the story of how American corn science “conquered” Russia had begun long before Khrushchev’s visit to Iowa. Its first episode came in 1892, with the upsurge of a US movement to help the starving Russian peasants. In retrospect, the American eagerness to feed Russia with American corn was a strategy that allowed, on the one hand, to propagate the new method of people-to-people diplomacy that had contributed to a better understanding between the two nations, and on the other hand, to bolster the image of America as the land of plenty that was eager to feed the whole world and of Russians as students that had to be taught the secrets of American success.

The relief movement provided new impulses for the American messianic feelings that emerged at the turn of the 20th century, were correlated with the prospects of Russian modernization, and have not lost their importance until our days. These messianic moods had four dimensions that originated from the socio-cultural characteristics of the American society itself and also from the agenda of its own development. The first dimension was a political one and consisted in the opposition to the Russian political regime and in the sense of responsibility for the process of its formation in the context of the US global democratization mission; thus, the Americans appeared in the role of “political mentors.” The second one arose from the attractive prospects of economic expansion, exports of goods, capital, and technologies into Russian markets, and participation in the modernization of Russian economy; Russia was supposed to learn “the lessons of American capitalism.” Religion provided the third dimension: the goal of replacing the Orthodox faith with a rational one and the projection of the Manichean worldview on the positioning of the Russian image allowed the Americans to present themselves as “the bearers of true faith.” Finally, the humanitarian dimension turned a famished and poverty-stricken Russia into the object of aid from the rich and prosperous America and the Americans—into “international philanthropists.

A story about the Nebraska and Iowa farmers who shared their corn with the Russian peasants

The American relief movement that surged during the 1891-1892 Russian Famine holds a special place in the history of Russian-American relations. It was the first example of people-to-people diplomacy in action, since the famine aid came from grassroots groups and individual States. It was also the first international humanitarian action of such scale both for the American National Red Cross (ANRC) and for the United States in general. The relief movement mixed and superimposed the old and the new images of the Russian Empire, emphasized its backwardness and helped Americans to become more familiar with the Russian national character.

This humanitarian action was in part responsible for the connection that began to emerge in the US social consciousness between the idea of searching for “free markets” and the sense of the American national mission to liberate the world.¹ Idealism and pragmatism intertwined in the motivations of the relief movement participants, who were moved both by profit-seeking and altruism. Such a mixed motivation was typical for the American nation in general. The great American writer Herman Melville embodied this idea in chapter 36 of *The White Jacket*: “And let us always remember that with ourselves, almost for the first time in the history of earth, national selfishness is unbounded philanthropy; for we cannot do a good to America but we give alms to the world.”

¹ For instance, William Williams, a well-known American historian, insisted that the participants of the philanthropic movement were moved by a double motive: the opening of new markets and the promotion of liberty. See *Williams W.A. The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society*. N.Y.: Random House, 1959. P. 293-294, 342-343.

The famine relief campaign for the benefit of Russian peasants took shape in early December 1891, after the Russian Charge d'Affairs Alexander Greger told William Edgar, the editor of the weekly trade journal "Northwestern Miller", that a cargo of corn flour was a form of aid that would be both timely and well-received by the Tsar's government that was willing to pay for the transport of food donations from the US interior regions to New York City and from there—to the shores of the Russian Empire.²

Edgar became the head of the first Russian Famine Relief Committee that was created in Minnesota in December 1891, after the state governor had made an appeal, reminding Americans about Russia's contribution to the Union cause during the American Civil War of 1861-1865. John M. Thayer, the governor of the "corn" state of Nebraska soon followed Edgar's example. After the Governor had made his appeal, the Nebraska State Journal published an article whose author argued that relieving famine in Russia would "call the attention of the world to the corn products of the United States" and "open the way for the introduction of American corn...to the people of Europe".³ Following Merriam's and Edgar's suggestion, the Russian Famine Relief Committee of Nebraska, headed by L.P. Ludden, started to collaborate closely with the Russian Famine Relief Committee of Minnesota in the task of collecting and sending food aid.⁴

In December 1891, another "corn state"—Iowa—emerged as the second important center of this philanthropic campaign. After an appeal issued by the Iowa governor Horace Boies, Benjamin Franklin Tillinghast, the editor of "The Davenport Democrat" and Alice French—a writer well known by her pen name of Octave Thanet—had created the Iowa Russian Famine Relief Commission that came to collaborate actively with the ANRC in sending whole corn and cornmeal to the famished Russian peasants.⁵ After she had received assurances from James G. Blaine, the US Secretary of State, and Alexander Greger that the Russian government was ready to receive famine aid from the American people, Clara Barton, the president of the ANRC, also became an active member of the movement and her organization became an important center for money donations.⁶

² Correspondence between William Edgar and Alexander Greger can be found in: Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi imperii (AVPRI). F. Posol'stva v Vashingtone. Op. 512/1. D. 737. L. 201-203, 222-223, 225-229.

³ Governor Thayer's Appeal // The Nebraska State Journal, December 20, 1891. P. 8.

⁴ Letter from W. Edgar to J.M. Thayer, 23 December 1891; letter from W.P. Merriam to J.M. Thayer, 26 December 1891. // State Archives of Nebraska. Nebraska State Historical Society. RG.1. State Governor. 14. Series 1. Box 8; letter from J.M. Thayer to A.E. Greger, 26 December 1891; letter from J.M. Thayer to W.P. Merriam, 28 December 1891. // Ibid., Box 11. Letter press book. Vol. 1891-1892. P. 89, 95.

⁵ The Davenport Democrat. Nov. 23, 1891; *Tillinghast B.F. A Far-Reaching Charity I* // Midland Monthly. 1894. April. Vol. 1. N 4. P. 330-331.

⁶ AVPRI. F. Posol'stva v Vashingtone. Op. 512/1. D. 56. L. 73-74 ob.; D. 737. L. 2, 124, 126, 130-131ob.; letter from C. Barton to J.G. Blaine, 14 December 1891. // Library of Congress (LC). Manuscript Division (MD). Clara Barton Papers. R. 83; letter from C. Barton to A.E. Greger, 1 January 1892 // Ibid., R. 26.

From the very beginning, organizers and participants of this philanthropic campaign confronted staunch opposition and harsh criticisms from the members of the first American “crusade” for the cause of Russian freedom, initiated by the liberal journalist George Kennan, after he had returned from a journey through Siberia. This “crusade” was supported by Russian political emigrants and also by progressive public and religious figures within the American society. In 1891, these communities joined their forces and formed the Society of American Friends of Russian Freedom that began to promote its vision on the pages of “Free Russia”. Just as the Russian famine relief efforts were beginning to take shape, the Friends of Russian Freedom were mobilizing the American public opinion against the ratification of the Russian-American Extradition Treaty that the US and the Russian governments had signed in 1887 and that, if ratified by the US Congress, would oblige the US to hand over to the Russian authorities all individuals allegedly involved in regicide. This anti-extradition campaign had put the finishing touches on the “demonic” image of the official Russia as a prison for political and religious dissidents.⁷

Although newspapers and journals published numerous articles on the subject of “the Russian famine”, William Edgar remarked that “the general tone of the press throughout the country . . . was scarcely encouraging, as it varied from mere tolerance of the idea [that America should help to alleviate it] to severe criticism”.⁸ The consensus in the American press was that it was senseless and unbecoming for Americans to be helping a government that sent its most energetic and enlightened subjects to Siberia, treated the Jews so harshly that they were forced to emigrate to the US, continued to rob its peasants, and whose actions had not only failed to alleviate the famine but instead led to bribery and speculation. The opponents of the famine relief campaign appealed to ideological considerations, arguing that it was morally wrong for a free and democratic republic to be helping a despotic and arbitrary empire. Meanwhile, the advocates of famine relief argued, following Edgar’s lead, that the question was not a political, but a humanitarian one. “The Northwestern Miller” and “Free Russia” became the main poles of this polemic whose origins remounted to drastically different positioning and images of Russia that existed in American representations.⁹

The House of Representatives of the US Congress became another arena of confrontation for the radically different approaches to the question of famine re-

⁷ On the first American “crusade” for the advancement of democracy in Russia in general and about the campaign against the ratification of the Russian-American Extradition Treaty in particular, see Zhuravleva V.I. *Understanding Russia in the USA: Images and Myths. 1881-1914*. Moscow: RGGU, 2012. P. 149-209; *Foglesong D.S. The American Mission and the «Evil Empire». The Crusade for a «Free Russia» since 1881*. N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2007. P. 16-27.

⁸ *Edgar W. C. The Russian Famine of 1891 and 1892: Some Particulars of the Relief Sent to the Destitute Peasants by the Millers of America in the Steamship Missouri*. Minneapolis: Millers and Manufacturers Insurance, 1893. P. 9.

⁹ See, for example, *Free Russia*. 1891. September. P. 6-7; October. P. 7, November. P. 3-4, December. P. 5; 1892. January. P. 4-5; March. P. 8, April. P. 4; May. P. 10; *The Northwestern Miller*. February 19, 1892. Vol. 33. N 8. P. 265.

lief for Russian peasants. The organizers of the philanthropic campaign argued that it had to be an American undertaking from the beginning to the end and asked for public funds to ship the food donations across the Atlantic. After much debate, the Congress had not authorized the appropriation of 100 thousand dollars by the Department of the Navy for the freightage of a ship. Due to the opposition of Democrats and Populists, the question of whether the US Federal Government would participate in the famine relief effort got postponed indefinitely.¹⁰

Yet, neither the press critics, nor the opposition in the House of Representatives could stall the momentum of the campaign. Its participants were driven by the ideals of humanism and compassion, but they also made references to the traditionally friendly relations between the two countries and to the image of Russia as a country that had always come to America's aid at critical moments of its history, be it during the War of Independence or the Civil War of 1861-65. They felt that it was inappropriate and humiliating to ask the Russian government for money to transport the food aid. Faced with a recalcitrant Congress, they decided to launch a large-scale public fundraising campaign in order to finance the freighting of the ships. Thus the relief campaign became a true effort of one people to help another.

The Russian Famine Relief Committee of the United States began its work in January 1892 and became the coordination center for the entire campaign, while working in close collaboration with the ANRC. It was directed by John W. Hoyt, an ex-governor of the Wyoming Territory and former editor of the "Wisconsin Farmer and Northwestern Cultivator" journal. Hoyt was a man of ample international experience, who had traveled far and wide and had visited the Russian Empire.

Farmers and millers in Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska sprang into action, hoping to put together a ship-load of corn and wheat flour for Russia in the shortest possible time. However, their efforts were delayed by the vastness of the North-Western states, the weather conditions, and the transport difficulties. The Eastern states were able to act faster, and Pennsylvania soon emerged as a true leader of the famine relief movement and opened the third Russian Famine Relief center—after Minnesota and Iowa.

In early February 1892, Mayor Edwin S. Stuart spearheaded the creation of the Famine Relief Association of the City of Philadelphia. One of its members, Rudolf Blankenburg, a Quaker, a well-known reformer, and himself a future Philadelphia mayor, put together and published a special pamphlet with a characteristic title: "Shall Russian Peasants Die of Starvation? A Question for Prosperous America."¹¹ In three weeks, the Association had managed to collect nearly \$ 100.000 in cash and to purchase over 2.000 tons of meal products in various locations throughout the country. These were shipped free of charge by fast freight schedule over several railroad lines that converged on Philadelphia. The

¹⁰ Congressional Record. 52-nd Congress. 1-st Session. Vol. 23. Pt. 1. P.110-111, 157-177.

¹¹ *Saul N.E.* Concord and Conflict. The United States and Russia, 1867–1914. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996. P. 345.

International Navigation Company had donated the use of its steamship “Indiana”, assuming all costs of the voyage; the Sterling Coal Company had filled her bankers with sufficient coal for the entire outward trip, free of charge, the grocers and provision dealers had donated food for the entire crew that had volunteered their services.

On February 22nd, 1892, on George Washington’s birthday, the steamship “Indiana” departed from Philadelphia for its destination—the Russian port of Libava, amid the cheers of 50 thousand enthusiastic spectators. Church ministers of various denominations presided over a farewell ceremony that left a lasting impression on everyone in attendance. Two months later, on the 23rd of April, the Philadelphia Association sent another steamship, “Conemaug” that carried 2.652.73 tons of flour and other stores. The use of this steamer was donated by the International Company under the same conditions that were used for “Indiana”.¹² During these months, the press of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Washington finally began to turn around and to support the philanthropic campaign, thereby helping to popularize it further.¹³

In early March of 1892, the State Committees of Minnesota and Nebraska had successfully accomplished their mission and got the steamship “Missouri” ready for its journey to Russia. Nebraska alone had contributed 1.350.000 pounds of corn to this effort. On 17 February 1892, this bounty was sent out of Lincoln and Omaha in two trains that were fittingly decorated for the occasion and covered with banners that read: “Nebraska can feed the world—1891 menu, 165.000,000 bushels of corn”, “Nebraska is the home of King Corn”, “Nebraska to Russia—Live and help live”, “King Corn of Nebraska—His credentials to the czar of the Russian”, “Prosperous Nebraska extends greeting and sympathy to the famine stricken Russians”, “Patriotic Nebraska with gratitude for Russia’s sympathy for the Union in the dark days of war”. Each sack of corn contained a booklet of simple cornmeal recipes translated into Russian.¹⁴ Forethoughtful American donors were conscious of the fact that Russians were unfamiliar with this cereal that could provoke indigestion, if badly cooked.

All in all, “Missouri” carried 5.900.000 pounds of flour and corn meal. The deadline for the collection was February 12th, since the freight sent after that date

¹² AVPRI. F. Posol’sstva v Washington. Op. 512/1. D. 55. L. 30; D. 737. L. 85-87, 98, 106 ob., 116, 124-125; Harper’s Weekly. March 5, 1892. P. 223; *Reeves F.B.* Russia Then and Now. 1892–1917. N.Y. N.Y., L.: Putman’s, 1917. P. 3-5, 7-8; *Blankenburg R.* Philadelphia and the Russian Famine of 1891 and 1892. Letters from Russia to the Philadelphia “Ledger”, “Times” and “Inquirer”. Philadelphia: Russian Famine Relief Committee, 1892. P. 58–59; The Philadelphia Public Ledger. April 25, 1892.

¹³ See for example: The New York Tribune. February 6, 13, 1892; The New York Herald. March 6, 8, 1892; The New York Times. February 5, 18, 1892; The New York World. May 3, 1892; The Philadelphia Public Ledger. February 1, 1892; The Washington Star. March 12, 1892; The Washington Post. February 1, 1892; The Chicago Times. April 2, 1892; The Chicago Daily Tribune. February 15, 1892.

¹⁴ The Nebraska State Journal. February 16, 1892. P. 2; February 17. P. 7; *Ludden L. P.* Report of the Work in Nebraska for the Russian Famine Sufferers to the Governor of the State. Lincoln, 1892. P. 5-6.

would not make it to New York on time for “Missouri’s” departure. By then, 4,753,516 pounds of corn had been sent. The rest of the load was bought with the money donated by the committee of the New York Chamber of Commerce.¹⁵ The steamship belonged to “The Atlantic Transportation Line” that had agreed not to charge freight for the journey. Railroad companies likewise let the donated goods pass without charge, while the telegraph companies transmitted hundreds of campaign-related messages to all corners of the country. The total price of this cargo, including expenditures for transportations, telegraph communication, warehousing, loading, marine insurance, fuel, and crew work during trip was about \$ 200,000.¹⁶

On March 15th, “Missouri” departed from New York to Libava, and on this occasion the city’s periodicals were very generous in their comments.¹⁷ According to Edgar’s records, donations for this ship had come from inhabitants of all socio-economic levels, from 450 cities and towns located in 25 different states.¹⁸ Edgar interpreted these statistics as a demonstration of high humanism that was so characteristic for the American people. In his view, American farmers and millers have shown to the whole world their readiness to feed the hungry without expecting anything in return from those who were not only far removed from them geographically, but also far behind them in their level of economic development.¹⁹

Iowa’s inhabitants and the American Red Cross were also successful in their joint effort. When it became evident that the federal aid was not forthcoming, Clara Barton doubled her fundraising efforts, and Iowa became part of the nationwide campaign coordinated by the American Red Cross that was unprecedented in its scale and international reach. In fact, at the state level, the Iowa famine relief campaign was one of the most vigorous. Thanks to the initiative and energy of Alice French, the Iowa women became an integral part of the effort. The international character of the campaign had provided these American women that already had experience in charity work with new opportunities for socialization.

Governor Boies, in consultation with Clara Barton, appointed 12 women to the Iowa Woman’s Auxiliary to the Red Cross. These women activists had visited every farm and every household of the state, using house-to-house canvassing—a tactic that was traditionally associated with electoral campaigns. Donations were also solicited at schools, churches, charity concerts and theater shows; Iowa State University offered public charity lectures.²⁰ The Iowa press was unanimous in its support for the campaign and published fundraising appeals and the names of no-

¹⁵ Northwestern Miller. Feb. 19, 26, 1892. Vol. 33. N 8, 9. P. 266, 302.

¹⁶ AVPRI. F. Posol’sstva v Vashingtone Op. 512/1. D. 55. L. 30; D. 56. L. 91-93; Northwestern Miller. February 12 and March 18, 1892. Vol. 33. N 7, 12. P. 228, 440 a.

¹⁷ For quotes from New York newspapers, see Northwestern Miller. March 25, 1892. P. 451-452.

¹⁸ Northwestern Miller. Feb. 26, 1892. Vol. 33. N 9. P. 301-302, 311.

¹⁹ *Edgar W. C.* Op. cit. P. 13.

²⁰ *Barton C.* The Red Cross in Peace and War. N.Y.: American Historical Press, 1910. P. 177; *Tillinghast B. F.* The Women’s Gift to Russia // Harper’s Weekly. April 23, 1892. P. 402; Report from A. French to Governor Boies, 23 May 1892. // State Archives of Iowa. State Historical Society of Iowa. RG. 043. Governors’ Records. G. VIII. Box 37.

table donors. In the Iowan countryside, the size of the corn donations varied from 1 measure to an entire railcar. The overall value of donations in money and kind reached 40 thousand dollars.

Meanwhile, Benjamin Tillinghast wrote an inquiry to Charles Emory Smith, the United States Minister to Russia, and received the following enthusiastic reply: “This movement is timely and altogether characteristic of the liberal and big-hearted people of Iowa. The 100,000 bushels of Iowa corn, which they proposed to send in the form of meal, will, I assure you, be most welcome. American corn meal has been quite unknown in Russia but since the present famine began some small quantities have been brought in and made into bread under American directions. I am informed that wherever it has been tried the peasants like it better than their ordinary rye bread”.²¹

Smith was basing his reply on the experiences of Colonel Charles Murphy, a former Wisconsin farmer. In late 1891, Colonel Murphy went to Berlin on a commission from the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Jeremiah Rusk. His task was to convince the German Army leadership that the American cornmeal was an excellent base for army provisions. When he got the news about the Russian famine, Murphy seized the new opportunity and, after sending cornbread samples to Saint-Petersburg through Charles Emory Smith, came there in person in order to meet with Russian public officials, including the Interior Minister I. N. Durnovo.²² Thus, in the early days of the philanthropic campaign, Murphy joined the ranks of those who advocated sending American corn to the famine-stricken regions, even though there was yet no consensus about the merits of this strategy.

By soliciting free services from the railroad, telegraph and insurance companies, Tillinghast ensured that the collected foodstuffs would be sent to the ANRC warehouses in New York without delay.²³ In a letter to Clara Barton, he made the following evaluation of what he was observing: “For 21 years I have been connected with the press and have been interested in many movements. I have never seen one where lukewarmness was so widespread... From the first this relief movement has interested me deeply because it was outside of politics and creed”.²⁴

In the District of Columbia, Clara Barton had managed to collect 20 thousand dollars—such was the response of the Nation’s capital to the special appeal of the local ANRC chapter.²⁵ Of this sum, \$12,651.62 was spent on the charter of the

²¹ Charles E. Smith to Benjamin F. Tillinghast, January 15, 1892. // AVPRI. F. Posol’stvo v Vashingtone. Op. 512/1, D. 737, L. 122.

²² *Saul N.E.* Concord and Conflict. P. 352–353.

²³ AVPRI. F. Posol’stva v Vashingtone. Op. 512/1. D. 56. L. 89-89 ob., 119, 217; D. 737. L.17, 108; *Tillinghast B.F.* Final Report of the Russian Famine Relief Commission to the Governor of the State of Iowa, June 1, 1892 r. // State Historical Society of Iowa. State Historical Society of Iowa. RG. 043. Governors’ Records. G. VIII. Box 37. P. 4-7.

²⁴ B.F. Tillinghast to C. Barton, 31 January 1892. // LC. MD. Clara Barton Papers. R. 83.

²⁵ District of Columbia Auxiliary Red Cross Association. To the Citizens and Residents of the National Capital. February 22, 1891 // NARS. RG 200. Gift Collection. RANRS. 1881–1916. Box 59.

steamship "Tynehead" that was loaded with "95.656 bushels of corn in bulk, 402 sacks [corn]meal, 731 sacks flour, 10 bags wheat, 9 bags rye and hospital stores." On May 2nd of 1892, "Tynehead" left the New York harbor for Riga, decorated with flags and streamers and loaded with goods that the American women had collected for Russian peasants in spite of bad weather and roads, lukewarm support for the campaign from some, and open opposition from others. The overall contribution from Iowa was worth about \$100,000.²⁶ Soon after this event, Tillinghast "asked Edgar what he thought would be the effect of sending four ship loads of American bread stuffs to Russia. [Edgar's] answer was that it would do more to cement friendly relations between Russia and this country than 50 years of diplomacy."²⁷

The fifth and the last steamship of the Russian "Famine Fleet" was outfitted thanks to the activity of the "Christian Herald" magazine, edited by Thomas de Witt Talmage, a Presbyterian pastor from Brooklyn and his friend Louis Klopsch who had a gift for both journalism and business. In March 1892, after Talmage gave a rousing sermon at his church, "Christian Herald" announced a subscription to raise funds that would be spent on foodstuffs for Russian famine relief. The appeal was answered by Americans of all social standings, although the campaign organizers emphasized that the load of this last steamship, "Leo" was paid for largely by low-income contributors. "Leo" was chartered for 7.5 thousand dollars and loaded with 2.130.800 pounds of flour, including the Red Cross contribution from the overflow of the "Tynehead". If the cornmeal sent with "Conemaugh" is added to this account, the "Christian Herald" emerges as the organization that had assembled the largest relief load of all. On June 13th of 1892, "Leo" left for Russian shores.²⁸

All five steamships of the "Famine Fleet" had safely reached the shores of the Russian Empire. The representatives of charity committees that arrived with them and supervised their unloading and the subsequent distribution of wheat and corn grain and flour informed Americans about the joy and hospitality with which they were met in Russia, shared their reflections about the causes of the famine, and also recreated the image of the Russian peasant.

Scholars who have studied this philanthropic movement are unanimous in their conclusions: it has positively contributed to the development of Russian-American relations and has actualized Russia's image in the American public consciousness as that of a country that had been historically friendly to the United States. However, these events acquire another important meaning if they are seen

²⁶ AVPRI. F. Posol'stva v Vashingtone. Op. 512/1. D. 55. L. 30, 101; D. 56. L. 30, 89; The New York World. May 3, 1892; *Tillinghast B.F. A Far-Reaching Charity. II // The Midland Monthly. 1894. Vol.1. N 5. May. P. 410; Borzo H.A. Chapter in Iowa-Russian Relations // Annals of Iowa. 1959. Vol. 34. N 8. P. 589-592.*

²⁷ B.F. Tillinghast to C. Barton, 11 June 1892 // LC. MD. Clara Barton Papers. R. 83.

²⁸ Christian Herald. March 23, 1892. P. 177, 181. See also: Russia's Cry Heard // Ibid. April 13, 1892; Moskovskie vedomosti. 8/20 June 1892. C. 2; *Pepper M. Ch. Life-Work of Louis Klopsch. Romans of a Modern Knight of Mercy. N.Y.: The Christian Herald, 1910. P. 15-20; T. De Witt Talmage: His Life and Work. L., 1902. P. 199-200.*

as the first example of citizen diplomacy in the history of these bilateral relations.²⁹

The Russian famine of 1891-92 came at the time of America's active integration into the world grain trade. The United States had made important gains from the grain export ban that existed in Russia from the fall of 1891 to the spring of 1892, while US grain exports had significantly increased over this period.³⁰ The famine relief movement had provided excellent publicity for the American agricultural cornucopia and had helped the US to expand its corn markets, which now included Russia. And so it was that at the end of the 19th century American corn began to conquer the vastness of Russia, thanks to the philanthropic efforts of the famine relief committees in the "corn states" of Iowa and Nebraska.

"More corn for Bessarabia": teaching American corn science in Russia

Those in the United States who commented on the famine episodes that occurred in Russia in 1891-92, 1897, and 1907 invariably pointed out that Russia needed to adopt American innovative agricultural methods. Besides donating money, corn and wheat to alleviate hunger in Russia, Americans were also ready and willing to share their knowledge of how to make agriculture prosper.

In the early 20th century, the *Zemstvo* of Bessarabia made contact with Perry Holden, professor of Iowa State College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, through the agents of the "International Harvester" in Odessa. Bessarabia was the leading corn-growing region of the Russian Empire,³¹ and its local government officials were interested in corn selection and cultivation techniques that Holden taught to Iowa's farmers. Professor Holden, who was unwilling to leave the United States, replied to this inquiry by recommending Louis Michael, who came to Russia in February 1910 and remained in charge of the "More Corn for Bessarabia" project until 1917.

Soon after his arrival to Bessarabia, Michael came face-to face with under-the-table dealing of the *Zemstvo*'s representatives who had launched a press campaign against him in the local newspapers and with the resistance from the majority of Uezd agronomists, who wanted to prevent Michael's interference in their field of activity and did not believe that the peasants were ready for new American methods. The estate owners left day-to-day decisions about their estates to their managers and had no desire to familiarize themselves with new agricultural methods, preferring to buy improved seed corn when they could obtain it. The peasants were more concerned about expanding their parcels than about increasing corn harvests, and saw the productivity of the land as God's gift instead of something that they could actively change. Michael had to recognize that the peculiar national character of Russian peasants made them see the idea of testing their seed

²⁹ More details about this philanthropic movement can be found in: *Saul N.E. Concord and Conflict*. P. 355, 361, 362-363; *Zhuravleva V.I. Understanding Russia in the United States: Images and Myths*. P. 209-258.

³⁰ *Simms J.Y. Impact of Russian Famine 1891-1892 upon the United States // Mid-America*. 1978. Oct. Vol.60. N 3. P. 179-181.

³¹ Corn cultivation began in Bessarabia when this region was under the Ottoman rule.

corn before planting as strange and outlandish: they considered it to be “a foreign fancy” that had no practical use.

Yet, all this opposition had not intimidated the persistent American who had managed to counteract it by making allies among teachers and priests. The chief among them was the Bessarabian marshal of the nobility, state councillor Alexander Nicolaevich Krupenskii. Thanks to his support, Michael managed to obtain funding from the Gubernie Zemstvo and to create the Zemstvo Corn Selection Commission that was headed by Krupenskii and staffed by Germans, a Serbian and a Czech that Michael had invited.

Michael also began to implement his other plan—the organization of school corn clubs, whose members would select and cultivate corn in their school gardens according to the American method and convince their parents of its goodness. Armed with a Russian translation of Holden’s “ABC of Corn Culture”³² written for American farmers, Michael plunged into teaching. He spent the winter of 1910-1911 selecting children from families of different ethnic origins and social status and forming “40 odd Boy’s and Girl’s clubs”. True to his American values, Michael designed these clubs as miniature Russian imitations of the American “melting pot” and motivated their work by organizing an inter-club competition, whose winners received a monetary award for producing the biggest corn harvest.

This model experience of rationalized corn cultivation had ensured the success of Michael’s entire enterprise and had frustrated both the skeptical forecasts made by local agronomists and Zemstvo officials and the peasants’ resistance.³³ In subsequent years, Michael had not only expanded his network of school clubs, but also attracted to his project some local government officials, big estate owners, and young peasants who had managed to significantly increase their corn harvests in a very short span of time. John Grout, the American Consul in Odessa, regularly informed the US Department of State about all these achievements.³⁴

Through the “More Corn for Bessarabia” program, Louis Michael promoted the idea that the US and Russia had similarities in their development and created an updated image of the Russian peasants whom he found capable of adopting innovative agricultural methods, in spite of living “in the land known for its famines” and of being the carriers of certain negative traits of the Russian national character. In Michael’s view, the activities of his Zemstvo Corn Selection Commission could be compared to the agrarian reform promulgated by Piotr Arkadievich Stolypin, with the only difference being that Stolypin’s reform had benefited broad groups of peasants, while his program was targeted at a select few who

³² Holden P.G. *ABC of Corn Culture*. Springfield, Ohio: Simmons Publishing Co, 1906.

³³ Michael L.G. *More Corn for Bessarabia: Russian Experience 1910–1917*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press; Detroit: Distributed by Wayne State University Press, 1983. P. 13-16, 26-36, 46-50, 60-61, 70-71, 88-89.

³⁴ Relevant information on this topic can be found in published consular reports: *Allen R.V. Russia Looks at America: The View to 1917*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1988. P. 170-171.

would form the basis for a new class of independent farmers and act as a buffer between the peasant mass and the state authorities.³⁵

Louis Michael noted that the benefits of mechanization in agriculture were clearly understood by the Russian peasants, especially the wealthy ones, and that McCormick reapers and other American agricultural machinery and tools were already widely used in the fields throughout the Russian Empire. These agricultural tools made field labors lighter and continued to constitute the main article of US exports to Russia. In 1910, Russia imported its first American tractor, and a growing number of publications in Russian agricultural journals reflected a growing interest for the technical inventions that had a “Made in USA” legend.³⁶

Nikita Khrushchev and Roswell Garst: «corn diplomacy» in the Cold War period

Forty years later, the baton in the relay-race to teach Russians about the American corn passed from Louis Michael to the Iowa farmer Roswell Garst, whose corn farm had greatly impressed the head of the Soviet government, Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev during his first visit to the US (September 15-27, 1959). This visit occurred after the 1957 launch of the first artificial satellite by the Soviet Union and in the context of a growing Russian-American cultural cooperation that began with an agreement on cultural and scientific exchanges between the U.S. and the Soviet Union that was signed in January 27, 1958 and came to be known as the Lacy-Zarubin Agreement.³⁷

By that time, the American pianist Van Cliburn had already won the First International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and stolen the hearts of the Soviet people, who quickly russified his name into a tender “Vanyechka”. Igor Moiseyev’s USSR State Folk Dance Ensemble had already made a sensation during its US tour. The Soviet exhibition in New York had already acquainted Americans with the Soviet achievements in industry and science: from gigantic sculptures of Soviet steel-makers to a Sputnik model emitting the famous beep. Meanwhile, the Sokolniki Park in Moscow played host to the American National Exhibition that presented the wonders of the mass consumer culture at the service of humanity and had become history thanks to the Kitchen Debate between the U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev.³⁸

On a darker side, before making his historic visit to the USA, Khrushchev had made his Berlin ultimatum. In November 1958, he placed his former allies in the anti-Hitler coalition before a stark choice: either the Western powers signed a German peace treaty and agreed to turn West Berlin into a demilitarized “free city” within six months, or the Soviets would turn control of access over to East

³⁵ Michael L.G. Op. cit. P. 90.

³⁶ Allen R.V. Op. cit. P. 172–177.

³⁷ About the meaning of this agreement see in details: Norman E. Saul, “The Program that Shattered the Iron Curtain: The Lacy-Zarubin (Eisenhower-Khrushchev) Agreement of January 1958, in William Benton Whisenhunt and Norman E. Saul, eds., *New Perspectives on Russian-American Relations* (N.Y., L.: Routledge, 2016): 229-239.

³⁸ Ivanian E.A. *Kogda govoriat muzy. Istoriia rossiisko-amerikanskikh kul’turnykh sviazei*. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2007. P. 341–366.

Germany. According to the American scholar William Taubman, “Khrushchev’s Berlin ultimatum was a way of getting Eisenhower to the table”.³⁹

On September 18th of 1959, Khrushchev made a speech at the United Nations General Assembly, calling countries and people of the world to a peaceful coexistence and announcing his famous program of complete and universal disarmament, which, in spite of its utopian hues, was quite positively received worldwide. This speech, together with the Camp David negotiations with the U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower, who was also subsequently invited to Moscow, indicated that the “thaw” in the Soviet domestic politics had also slightly melted the ice of the Cold War. Although Eisenhower was quite elusive in his promises, he generally agreed to resume the search for a diplomatic solution to the German question through a summit of the four powers. Taken together with the growing cultural exchange, these developments demonstrated that the two leaders were leaning towards a relative normalization of the US-Soviet relations and were trying to understand the other side’s position.

Nevertheless, Khrushchev’s conduct during his first US visit was quite contradictory and, at times, extremely aggressive. On the one hand, he was obviously proud to be the first Soviet leader who had been officially invited to the United States. Khrushchev had been desperately seeking Eisenhower’s invitation since 1957 and, when it finally came, saw it as a consequence of his own “missile doctrine”. At the same time, although the Soviet leader never missed his chance to talk about the Soviet triumph in space and the advantages of socialism over capitalism, he was extremely ill at ease and unsure of himself. The American prosperity filled him with anxiety and desire to look for any excuse to find fault and to fight back. Khrushchev feared that Americans would be looking for ways to humiliate him and would not receive him with due respect.⁴⁰

Oleg Grinevskii, a prominent Soviet diplomat who formed part of Khrushchev’s delegation, later shared his impressions: “What Khrushchev wanted to avoid most of all was to look like an ingenious simpleton in front of the cunning capitalists, who, like circus magicians, presented him with magic tricks out of a hat and showed him all kinds of prosperity miracles that could be found in their rotting world. His team of counsellors and assistants—Adzhubei, Satiukov, Ilyichev and others—had talked his ears off with such warnings. They insisted that ‘the times had changed. Peter the First went to the West as a student, in his modest carpenter attire. But you, Nikita Sergeevich, are going to America to teach. Any American general would gladly turn his coat in order to get but a glimpse of the Soviet space and interplanetary launching pads, with Soviet spaceships taking off towards the stars . . .’ All this nonsense was in Khrushchev’s head as he

³⁹ *Taubman W.* Khrushchev. The man and his era. N.Y., L.: W. W. Norton & Company, Simon & Schuster, 2003. P. 403.

⁴⁰ *Taubman W.* Khrushchev. Pp. 396-439. See also: *Zubok V.M.* Neudavshaiasia imperiia: Sovetskii Soiuz v kholodnoi voine ot Stalina do Gorbacheva. Moscow: Rossijskaya politicheskaya ensiklopediya, 2011. P. 208-209

journeyed through America, and a deep trench formed between him and the USA as a result.”⁴¹

Nevertheless, as Grinevskii rightly notes,⁴² Khrushchev’s head was also a battlefield between a dogmatic communist and a pragmatic peasant who, upon Khrushchev’s return from the United States, took it upon himself to recreate in the Soviet Union all the good things that he had seen in the American daily life. This peasant *alter ego* manifested itself with singular strength in Khrushchev’s relationship with the American farmer Roswell Garst.

Khrushchev’s interest in Garst was no accident. This farmer-millionaire, as the American periodicals called him, was “an American revolution in agriculture”. His two thousand hectares of land in Coon Rapids, Iowa had become the birthplace of various agricultural innovations; one of them was hybrid corn, which was the product of inbreeding and crossbreeding. Garst and his business partner Charles Thomas owned a big joint-stock company that produced hybrid corn seeds and formed part of the “Pioneer”—a national leader in seed production that, apart from hybrid corn varieties, also produced new breeds of chicken and pigs. Garst was also experimenting with new fertilization methods and skillfully used silage—a hash made out of corn cobs and other ingredients—as a feed for his livestock.⁴³

The story of Khrushchev’s acquaintance with Garst had begun four years earlier. In January 1955, at the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee Khrushchev made a speech about livestock production, in which he made numerous references to the American experience as an example for the USSR to follow. On February 8th, a summary of his speech appeared in “The New York Times” and was then reprinted in “The Des Moines Register” of Iowa. Two days later, in an editorial that won him next year’s Pulitzer Prize, its editor Lauren Soth made a provocative proposal. Promising to hide none of Iowa’s “secrets,” he invited Russians to tour Iowa for “the lowdown on raising high quality cattle, hogs, sheep, and chickens.” In turn, Iowa farm experts could visit the Soviet Union and share their know-how.⁴⁴ Thus the “corn” state of Iowa had once more become the agent of Russian-American rapprochement.

In July 1955, a Soviet delegation headed by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Vladimir Matskevich came to the USA and visited Roswell Garst at his farm, which was among Iowa’s most prosperous, and at “Garst&Thomas Company”—one of the largest of its kind in Iowa. Iowa’s residents met the Soviet specialists with open arms, showed them everything there was to see and provided them with detailed explanations and a pile of manuals. Upon the delegation’s return to the USSR, Matskevich compiled a 400-page report that, unbeknownst to him, had a lot in common with what Louis Michael taught to Bessarabian peasants half a

⁴¹ Grinevskii O.A. *Tysiacha i odin den’ Nikity Sergeevicha*. Moscow: Vagrius, 1998. P. 57-58.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁴³ *Missionary of the Food*. Roswell Garst // *The New York Times*. September 23, 1959.

⁴⁴ *The Des Moines Register*. February 10, 1955 (editorial).

century earlier. Like Michael, Matskevich paid special attention to the calibration and selection techniques for corn seeds and the cultivation of high-yield hybrid corn varieties. His main conclusion was that the American corn cultivation methods could resolve the food problem in the Soviet Union and also dramatically increase meat production, since the best silage for livestock could be made out of young corn leaves, stalks and ears. Matskevich's report also had a special section that described Garst's farm, and Khrushchev first got to know Garst through this document.⁴⁵

Roswell Garst was among the twelve American farmers (five of them from Iowa) who dared to travel to the other side of the "iron curtain" in October 1955, defying the trading ban that the US Department of State still had in place against the Soviet Union and the danger of being accused of having links with Communists. Garst visited the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow and then stopped in Kiev and Odessa on his way to Khrushchev's summer residence in Yalta—a visit that he made on Khrushchev's personal invitation. During his tour, the American entrepreneur lost no opportunity to study how the Soviets cultivated corn and produced hybrid seeds, noting the gap between the Soviet agricultural capacity and the food demands of the growing population, and demonstrated his readiness to teach the ABC of the American corn science: production of hybrid seeds, fertilization, irrigation, mechanization, and the use of agricultural chemicals.

During his interview with Garst, Khrushchev made him a proposal: "Let us trade. We can buy some of your hybrid corn seeds. But keep in mind that our country is vast—we plant millions of hectares of corn. Will you be able to sell us enough hybrid corn seed for such a large area? Will we be able to pay for them, even if you could sell us enough? Besides, we have our own hybrids of good quality. So, what we should do is not only trade, but also exchange expertise. We will give you our Soviet hybrids and their breeding lines, and you give us your hybrids and breeding lines in exchange." To this Garst replied that he could not share his breeding lines, because they constituted a trade secret, and instead offered a different deal: "Send your agronomist to my farm and let him see how we produce our hybrid corn seeds. Send over your livestock specialist so that he can see how we feed our meat cattle. Send your biochemist so that he can learn how we fix atmospheric nitrogen and make urea that is mixed into silage together with corn cobs and molasses. Send your machine operator over to my farm and let him work in the fields at my son's side so that he can see for himself that corn production can be organized in such a way that one person can work 100 hectares and six people—800 hectares."⁴⁶

In the end, the two men came to an agreement that Garst would sell to the Soviet State 5 thousand tons of different varieties of corn seed and add in some of

⁴⁵ *Khrushchev S.N.* Nikita Khrushchev: Reformator. Moscow: Vremya, 2010. P. 239-240. *Brown P.N.* Diplomatic Farmers: Iowans and the 1955 Agricultural Delegation to the Soviet Union // *The Annals of Iowa*. 2013. Vol 1. N 72. Winter. P. 31-62.

⁴⁶ Quote from Adzhubei A. et al. *Litsom k litsu s Amerikoi. Rasskaz o poezdke N.S. Khrushcheva v SShA*. Moscow: Politizdat, 1960. P. 338-339.

his pedigree seeds as a bonus on this deal. These pedigree seeds were later used to produce hybrids at the Odessa breeding station. Besides, the Soviet Union bought the technology for building a corn-cleaning and calibrating plant in the Krasnodar region. The enterprising Garst had his hands free to make these deals, since he had obtained a termless export license from the State Department before leaving for the USSR. Yet, although he had acted first and foremost as a businessman—the Soviet State had paid him in gold for his seeds, eventually his frequent trips to Soviet Russia did attract the FBI's attention: he was later called in for explanations and had to convince the FBI that he was no Communist.

While he had personally benefitted from his agreement with Khrushchev, Garst had also managed to break the ice in the Soviet-American trade relations and became an active advocate for a peaceful collaboration with the USSR and the development of business ties and knowledge exchange between Americans and Russians. In 1958, he addressed the Soviet agricultural delegation with the following words: "The main reason for your success is the enormous work that you have done in the sphere of popular education and professional cadre preparation. What you need now is to make contacts that would help you adopt agricultural innovations and increase the production of grains, meats and other foodstuffs."⁴⁷

Garst made three more visits to the Soviet Union and met with Khrushchev one more time, in Sochi, in spring of 1959. On Khrushchev's request, he had even gone to Kazakhstan to see the virgin lands that reminded him of the vastness of his native Iowa. In the Krasnodar region, Garst instructed a kolkhoz foreman who did not want to use fertilizers about the correct ways to grow corn. The informal relationship between Khrushchev and Garst had developed into a true friendship, notwithstanding the Cold War.⁴⁸ Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev who had not forgotten his solid peasant upbringing came to a perfect understanding with Roswell Garst and dreamed of turning corn into a true queen of the Soviet fields.

During his US journey, Khrushchev paid a two-day return visit to his American farmer friend (September 22-23, 1959). According to the eyewitnesses, the days he spent in the rich and flourishing Iowa, in the heart of the US "corn belt" were the most successful part of Khrushchev's visit. Receptions given to Khrushchev in Washington, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco had not come anywhere close to the warm and friendly welcome that he had received in Iowa, whose periodicals went as far as declaring September 22nd "the Day of Khrushchev in the Mid-West".⁴⁹ Khrushchev himself told Henry Cabot Lodge, the official host to the Soviet leader, that "it has been the highlight of the whole trip".⁵⁰

Khrushchev hoped that by adopting American agricultural methods the Soviet Union would "catch up with America and surpass" its levels of food production. In his address to Iowa's residents, he championed peaceful coexistence and competition. This call could not but please them, since Khrushchev also recog-

⁴⁷ Quoted from Adzhubei et al., op. cit., P. 340.

⁴⁸ *Khrushchev S.N.* Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer. P. 244-245.

⁴⁹ Grinevskii O.A. Tysiacha i odin den' Nikity Sergeevicha. P. 77.

⁵⁰ *Weherwein A.C.* Iowa Skeptical, but Enjoyed Visit // *The New York Times*. September 25, 1959.

nized that at that moment Iowan farms were producing significantly more corn and meat than Kuban' *kolkhozes*. Anticipating Khrushchev's reaction to what he would see in Iowa, American journalists wrote that Iowa was precisely the place where the Soviet leader could personally appreciate the achievements of the American agricultural revolution and see for himself what levels of prosperity a capitalist society could reach.⁵¹

Khrushchev's coming had briefly made Garst's farm the center of attention not only of the entire United States, but also of the whole world. So many newspaper men came there, that, in the words of "The New York Times" correspondent James Reston, "there were more photographers in the trees than birds".⁵² In late August 1959, the State Department received 471 media accreditation request to cover Khrushchev's visit.⁵³

The testy Garst got so fed up with the press representatives that he threw silage and corn cobs at them and even gave one of them a kick. In the end, the National Guard and the Army together with the State Department officials who accompanied Khrushchev had to form a human chain around Garst and his high-profile visitor, so that the latter could examine the farm without further interruptions.⁵⁴ Khrushchev's son Sergei later recalled: "Garst had completely stunned my father with the show of his achievements. Father just kept saying: 'That's what we need to do at home'."⁵⁵

Much as the journalists had bothered Garst, the press coverage of Khrushchev's visit provided excellent publicity for his prosperous farm and allowed him to share his agricultural expertise with the entire world. In one of the numerous articles that "The New York Times" published on the subject, Garst appeared as a missionary of the American agricultural revolution that had mobilized science and technology to produce such innovations as hybrid corn varieties, synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides. To promote these innovative agricultural methods so that more products could be obtained with less human labor was what Garst saw as his goal. This man symbolized the American prosperity and he chose the Soviet Union as the object of his agricultural mission, in spite of the "iron curtain" and of the Cold War. Khrushchev dreamt of providing the Soviet people with plenty of meat, and Garst had made a commitment to help him in this task. In an interview to "The New York Times", he made the following statement: "Mr. Khrushchev's primary interest is to find out why 12 per cent of the people of the United States can produce enough food for the 100 per cent and with a diet high in the meat type of human protein. He is interested in finding out how to produce a better diet with

⁵¹ *Weherwein A.C.* Premier to Find the Iowa Doors Open // The New York Times. September 10, 1959.

⁵² Khrushchev's Odyssey // The New York Times. September 24, 1959.

⁵³ *Lee H.* Roswell Garst: A Biography. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1984. P. 223.

⁵⁴ A photographer from "Associated Press" had captured this moment in a photo that was then widely reproduced in the American press.

⁵⁵ *Khrushchev S.N.* Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer. P. 247.

less and less people. This is what I basically intend to help him discover. This is what he basically wants to know".⁵⁶

During their first meeting in Crimea Garst had already excited Khrushchev's imagination with his tales of how granulated fertilizers could be used to grow corn. Now, at his home base, he could give Khrushchev a practical demonstration of how the use of nitrogen-rich mineral fertilizer instead of the traditional planting of nitrogen-fixing leguminous plants between the rows of corn increased corn yields. Khrushchev, whose faith in corn as the most productive cereal known to human beings was as great as Garst's, listened and watched with rapture. The trench method that Garst used for turning corn cobs and stalks into silage for livestock had also filled him with great enthusiasm.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, Garst's wife was on her own international mission, as she acquainted Khrushchev's wife with all the exciting details of American provincial life.⁵⁸

The American press had given Garst his due for having skillfully dispelled a huge "diplomatic storm cloud", by giving the Soviet leader a guided tour of the real America and a taste of true American hospitality.⁵⁹ Garst's corn calibration plant in the town of Coon Rapids became the site of the famous photo, in which the American farmer and the Soviet leader are standing side by side with corn ears in their hands. In fact, American periodicals had published a whole series of photos with Khrushchev holding a bunch of corn ears, as if they were flowers. Even the "Life" magazine had considered the photo of a laughing Khrushchev standing next to Garst with a corn ear in his hand to be worthy of its cover.⁶⁰ This cover photo seemed to confirm Garst's opinion that "two farmers could settle the problems of the world faster than diplomats".⁶¹

Later on, Garst explained his motivation in more general terms: "I think from our own selfish interests, we cannot effort to have one-third of the world possess the atomic bomb and the hydrogen bomb and nothing else—to be hungry at the same time. This is too great a temptation".⁶² Just as it happened at the end of the 19th century, in the middle of the 20th century, American farmers were choosing Russia as the object of their messianic impulse, laying aside ideological and political considerations.

In his speech at an official dinner reception in Des Moines, Governor Herschel Loveless stressed the key role of the Corn State of Iowa in the exchange of agricultural expertise between the USA and the USSR that had begun four years earlier and had opened the door for a wider cooperation: "These [agricultural]

⁵⁶ Missionary of Food. Roswell Garst // The New York Times. September 23, 1959.

⁵⁷ *Khrushchev S.N. Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer*. P. 242-243; Adzhubei et al., op. cit., P. 343-346.

⁵⁸ *Asbury E.E. Mme. Khrushchev will Tour Town* // The New York Times. September 23, 1959.

⁵⁹ *Lee H. Roswell Garst*. P. 226.

⁶⁰ *Life*. October 5, 1959 (cover).

⁶¹ Stevenson Reports Khrushchev Hints at Give in Negotiations. Chat Held in Iowa // The New York Times. September 24, 1959.

⁶² Roswell Garst, 79, Khrushchev's Farm Host in 1959 // The New York Times. November 7, 1977.

exchanges have led to broader exchanges in cultural, educational, scientific fields between Americans and citizens of the Soviet Union. So, in a sense, Iowa has led the way to more people-to-people contacts between our two great countries".⁶³ In other words, as the local periodicals never got tired of repeating on the occasion of Khrushchev's visit, Iowa's warm and humid climate that was so good for corn cultivation had also managed to melt the ice of the Cold War". The American national press deemed Khrushchev's visit to be quite a success and an ice-breaker for Soviet American relations.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the Soviet chroniclers spared no praise and called the Soviet leader's trip to the US an outright "triumph". Upon Khrushchev's return, his son-in-law, Aleksei Adzhubei and a group of Soviet journalists rapidly and eagerly produced a propaganda book entitled "Face to face with America". On the pages of this book, the First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee appeared before the Soviet and the Eastern European audiences as a peace fighter, a great speaker, and a skilled negotiator. The book does much to confirm the suspicions expressed by James Reston in his "New York Times" article that described Khrushchev's visit to Iowa in all its picturesque details: "In a world-wide propaganda battle, this is not frivolous nonsense. It is deadly serious, for while it was inevitable that Moscow would be given much raw material for propaganda in the neutral countries, it was not inevitable that clumsy administration should make things worse."⁶⁵

This propaganda effort went hand in hand with the onset of what became a veritable "corn epic". Throughout the entire territory of the Soviet Union—from Kazakhstan to Taimyr—corn plantations began to displace wheat, rye, and fodder crops. Efforts to grow corn were not limited to the southern regions, but were also made in climatic zones that were completely unsuitable for corn cultivation. In the end, it became obvious that the fantastic grain so zealously promoted by Khrushchev could not replace traditional cereals. What is more, as an overreaction to this policy, after Brezhnev's rise to power in 1964, even the regions where corn had been successfully cultivated since the times of the Russian Empire stopped planting it completely. Neither could Khrushchev achieve the main objective of his corn crusade: the Soviet Union did not surpass the USA in meat production. The taste of corn that generations of Soviet people who grew up after Khrushchev's visit with Garst learned to love from their childhood was not the taste of sweet corn that is so well known and loved throughout the world. The Soviet "queen of the fields" was meant for feeding cows and pigs, because in their effort to increase meat production the Soviet authorities planted no other varieties. It is obvious, that the source of these problems did not lie in the American experience, but in the inability to adapt it rationally and productively to a different context.

⁶³ Texts of Speeches made by Government Loveless, Lodge and Khrushchev at Dinner at Des Moines // *The New York Times*. September 23, 1959.

⁶⁴ See, for example: Khrushchev after His U.S. Tour // *The New York Times*. September 27, 1959; Mr. K Due in Moscow Today; Trip Praised // *The Los Angeles Times*. September 28, 1959.

⁶⁵ Reston, *op. cit.*

On the other hand, the six months that followed Khrushchev's visit to the USA seem to have been the "warmest" time of the Cold War. The intensive negotiations on the German question between Khrushchev and Eisenhower at his summer residence of Camp David had raised hopes that a *détente* in Soviet-American relations was indeed possible, even though these negotiations did not produce any specific agreements. Nevertheless, these hopes soon proved to be an illusion, and the "warming" of bilateral relations had ended soon after it began. The American U-2 incident had damaged Khrushchev's relations with Eisenhower beyond repair and was followed by the construction of the Berlin wall, the placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba, and the Caribbean Crisis that had pushed the world to the brink of a nuclear disaster.

William Taubman, one of the most authoritative scholars of "the Khrushchev epoch", thinks that "in many ways Khrushchev's trip was a success: his very presence in the citadel of capitalism; the way many ordinary Americans received him; 'progress' enough on Berlin to justify the president's endorsing the summit Khrushchev had so long been seeking. But the glass was also half empty. The progress in Berlin was more image than substance: Khrushchev's personal failings undermined his diplomacy".⁶⁶

The opinions of those American researchers who consider Khrushchev's visit to have been fruitless or a failure altogether are contested by Kyle A. Kordon, an American historian who bases his conclusions primarily on Khrushchev's own memoirs and the writings of his son. Kordon rightly notes that in order to achieve the kind of mutual understanding that Khrushchev sought the two leaders first had to exchange information that would reveal the each side's position and motivations. Seen in this light, "the spirit of Camp David" provided an indispensable base for the return to good-faith diplomatic relations between Russia and the United States, to the situation where one side would truly listen to the other. What Khrushchev was able to achieve, as he got to know Americans and their manner of life and thought, was precisely a better understanding of the American position.⁶⁷ Alexander Fursenko and Timothi Naftali also include in list of benefits of Khrushchev's visit the fact that he made a genuine effort to put in practice in the Soviet Union all things good that he had seen in the United States.⁶⁸

Even though Khrushchev's visit had not brought about the much-awaited *détente* in Soviet American relations, his friendship with "the corn diplomat" Garst had not come to an end. The two men kept writing to each other. In May 1963, Garst came to the Soviet Union and met Khrushchev once more. First, he negotiated with the head of the Soviet State in Kremlin, in the presence of I. T. Volovchenko, the Minister of Agriculture, and then had dinner with Khrushchev

⁶⁶ *Taubman W.* Khrushchev. P. 425.

⁶⁷ *Kordon K.A.* Khrushchev Comes to America: The Advent of Mutual Understanding // *Voces Novae: Chapman University Historical Review*. 2009. Vol. 1. N 1. P. 147-151, 166-169.

⁶⁸ *Fursenko A., Naftali T.* Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary. New York and London: W.W. Norton & C, 2006. P. 242-245.

at his summerhouse.⁶⁹ After his demotion, Khrushchev continued to experiment with the hybrid corn seeds that his old friend Roswell Garst would send him from the United States.⁷⁰ Now that he no longer had all the arable lands of the country at his disposal, he had to limit his experiments to a small plot of land at his summerhouse.

Sergei Khrushchev assured his readers that Iowans have kept a very warm memory of his father's visit. An Iowa governor had told him: "Your father has made our state famous . . . And our corn as well."⁷¹ We would do well to add to this statement that Roswell Garst had also become a celebrity thanks to the First Secretary of the Soviet Union Communist Party. In 2009, Iowa celebrated the 50th anniversary of Khrushchev's visit with a conference entitled "Citizen Diplomacy in U.S.-Russia Relations", publications in the local press, a parade of both antique and modern farm machinery down the Main Street and the creation of a museum on Garst's farm.⁷²

At the eve of this celebration, Garst's granddaughter Rachel made the following comment to the correspondent from "Rossiyskaya Gazeta": "The more we talked about this idea, the more people became interested in participating. Our organizing committee already includes farmers and businessmen, the Iowa State Historical Society, and many other people who are interested in further strengthening Russian-American relations. My grandfather's house and farm have been added to the US National Heritage list. The purpose of our media campaign is to remind the people about the enormous importance of Khrushchev's visit to America. . . . We are very proud of our friendship with Russian people and want to develop it further. We also hope that these kinds of contacts will help to maintain peace between our countries."⁷³

During this anniversary celebration, it was decided that Iowa needed a theater play about these long-gone days and the events that warmed Russian and American hearts in the harsh climate of the Cold War. The play that was appropriately titled "Peace through Corn" was first presented to the public on January 26th 2011. Its script was written by Cynthia Mercati and is based on memoirs, press accounts, and letters that the two men sent to each other. It is a story of friendship between two very different people that, according to producer Robert Ford, had nothing but corn in common, yet corn made their friendship possible.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Khrushchev and Iowan Renew Talk of Farms // The New York Times. May 11, 1963.

⁷⁰ Khrushchev is Living at Dacha He Had as Premier // The New York Times. January 9, 1965.

⁷¹ *Khrushchev S.N.* Nikita Khrushchev: Reformer. P. 248-249.

⁷² 50th Anniversary of Khrushchev's Visit to Iowa is Celebrated. International Bonds Developed as a Result of Friendship between Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and Iowa Farmer Roswell Garst // Prairie Farmer. August 31, 2009 // <http://farmprogress.com/story-50th-anniversary-of-khrushchevs-visit-to-iowa-is-celebrated-9-31177>

⁷³ Khrushchev v poliakh // Rossiyskaya gazeta. 2 April 2009 // <http://www.rg.ru/2009/04/02/hrushev.html>

⁷⁴ Theater of Iowa in US Stages Play about Khrushchev // <http://rt.com/art-and-culture/khrushchev-garst-corn-theatre>

As he shared his knowledge about corn cultivation, Roswell Garst was acting as a citizen diplomat, just as the Iowa and Nebraska farmers and Louis Michael did before him. Even though Khrushchev's visit to Iowa had not led to tangible Soviet-American agreements and the Soviet *kolkhozes* had not adopted Garst's methods, it was not made in vain. While it is true that Americans had once more acted as Russia's teachers, sharing the secrets of their success and prosperity with a backward country—be its name the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union, the history of the corn diplomacy has an important lesson to teach us. Its true importance lies in that people on the two sides of the Atlantic got a chance to get to know and to understand each other better, which was of paramount importance during the Cold War.

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Images of Revolution: An American Photographer in Petrograd, 1917

David H. Mould

“Well, I came to Russia against your wish and I am paying the price,” Donald Thompson wrote his wife Dorothy (Dot) from Petrograd in late July 1917. “If I ever get back home safely, this is the last trip I shall make. . . . Today I feel as you always want me to feel—sick and tired of being a war photographer.”¹

Thompson had been away from home for almost eight months, and in Russia since mid- February. Over the next six months, he photographed demonstrations and street-fighting in Petrograd, was caught in crossfire between protestors and troops, and was arrested and thrown in jail. He travelled to Moscow and to the Russian front lines in Latvia. He met and photographed Tsar Nicolas II, political and military leaders, and prominent foreign visitors. He witnessed political maneuverings, the power struggle between the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet, and the breakdown of discipline in the army. Often working late into the night, Thompson suffered from exhaustion, stress and poor diet. With food shortages, even in the hotels and restaurants patronized by foreigners, Thompson—already a lean 120 pounds—lost weight. Although he claimed he could live on bread and coffee, “the black bread that one gets now in Petrograd is one of the major horrors of war,” he wrote.² A few weeks later, he fell ill with a stomach infection and spent two weeks in hospital.

In late July, Thompson was ready to go home, but not ready to abandon the life of the “photographer-adventurer” that had taken him to every front in Europe since August 1914. After telling Dot that this would be his last trip, Thompson wrote: “But there is no use in saying this. I shall be the way I always have been. A few weeks at home and then I’ll pick up the paper at breakfast and read about something happening somewhere and I’ll want to go there.”³

Donald Thompson in Russia is a compilation of letters to his second wife in Topeka, Kansas, written between December 12, 1916, and August 21, 1917⁴ and

¹ *Donald Thompson in Russia* (New York: Century, 1918), 324.

² *Ibid.*, 34.

³ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁴ Thompson’s letters are dated by the Western Gregorian calendar, which ran 13 days ahead of the old-style Julian calendar used in Russia in this period. According to the Gregorian calendar, the events of the February Revolution actually took place in March, and those of the October Revolution in November. The introduction retains Thompson’s

published in 1918. It is impossible to know whether the letters are exactly what Thompson wrote at the time, or whether he edited them later to fill out the narrative and reinforce his central theme—that the major cause of Russia’s revolution and withdrawal from the war was German intrigue. He claims in the introduction that “at the time they were penned the idea of writing a book had never entered my head.” But he asked Dot to keep the letters and his motive for publication is clear. “When I came back from Russia, after one of the most exciting trips of my life, I was glad that I could show the whole world the proofs that German intrigue was the cause of Russia’s downfall. German intrigue, working among the unthinking masses, has brought Russia to her present woeful condition.” The letters, he added, “tell a story that I know a great many people may doubt. Fortunately, the details are largely substantiated by the motion-picture film I have shown in this country [*The German Curse in Russia*] supplemented by thousands of photographs which have appeared in “Leslie’s Weekly” and in newspapers throughout the world.”⁵

Thompson’s letters are one of the few first-hand accounts by an American of events in Russia from late February to early August 1917. The photographer’s experiences feature prominently in Helen Rappaport’s recent book, *Caught in the Revolution*, that recounts the testimonies of foreign journalists, diplomats, businessmen, nurses and other others living in Petrograd in 1917. “It is a matter of considerable regret,” writes Rappaport, “not to mention a loss to history and scholarship, that Thompson’s original photographic negatives do not appear to have survived.”⁶ The title of the book testifies to Thompson’s zeal for self-promotion. Other expatriates wrote about their experiences in books with titles such as *Runaway Russia*, *Six Red Months in Russia*, *Inside the Russian Revolution*, *Diary of the Russian Revolution*, *Unchained Russia*, *Russia’s Agony*, and, of course, *Ten Days that Shook the World*. Thompson’s is one of only a few to include the name of the author in its title; in *Donald Thompson in Russia*, the author portrays himself not only as a witness to history, but as an actor in the drama.

Born in Topeka in 1885, Thompson worked as a freelance photographer, covering the 1903 Kansas River flood, the 1912 Democratic Convention, and the 1913 Colorado miners’ strike. When war broke out in Europe, he was commissioned by a Montreal newspaper to film Canadian troops. It was his big break. “As a photographer,” he wrote, “I knew it would be the greatest story in history and I determined that I was going to cover it. I sold everything I had, bought a complete photographic outfit and my steamship ticket.”⁷ He sailed to Europe in August 1914.

The rapid growth of American mass media—newspapers, illustrated weekly magazines and motion pictures—in the first two decades of the 20th century created new opportunities for news photographers. Most, like Thompson, began their

dating but refers to the February and October Revolutions, because this is how they are commonly termed.

⁵ *Donald Thompson in Russia*, xviii.

⁶ *Caught in the Revolution: Petrograd 1917* (London: Hutchinson, 2016), 332-3.

⁷ *Donald Thompson in Russia*, vii.

careers shooting stills for newspapers and magazines, and later shot film footage, using bulky, hand-cranked cameras mounted on tripods. The main customers for their films were the international newsreel companies, based in New York, Chicago, London, and Paris; several newspaper groups, notably the Hearst papers and the *Chicago Tribune*, also had interests in the newsreel business, as owners or part-owners of weekly reels. Footage was sometimes compiled into feature-length films. The rapid growth of the Hollywood movie industry gave newsreels and topical films thousands of theater outlets, and an audience for whom moviegoing was becoming a way of life.

The popular image of the brave, free-spirited news photographer, who defied danger, death, the elements and the censors to get the picture, was largely fashioned during World War One, when photographers faced all these obstacles. It was, like most such images, a composite of fact and fiction, so it is hardly surprising that, in recalling their exploits, photographers such as Thompson often added colorful details and dramatic turns. Thompson compensated for his less-than-imposing physical presence by portraying himself as a pioneer war photographer. He was proud to tell people he was from Kansas, a state which, with its rich and bloody history, seemed to symbolize the American frontier. The trade and popular press were willing accomplices in this reconstruction of reality, accepting the stories at face value, and often adding their own spice to the narrative.⁸ “Nearly every reader of news of the great European war is familiar with the name of Donald C. Thompson, known the world over as ‘The War Photographer from Kansas,’” reported the trade newspaper *Moving Picture World*. “He is of a kind we sometimes read about but rarely collide with in the flesh.”⁹ In Belgium, Thompson worked on both sides of the lines with Edward Alexander Powell, war correspondent of the *New York World*, covering the Battle of Mons and the German siege of Antwerp. “He was a slim, wiry little fellow, as hard as nails and as tough as rawhide,” wrote Powell. “He wore riding breeches and leggins and was as bow-legged as though he had spent his life astraddle of a horse.”¹⁰ The *Chicago Tribune* celebrated “Shrimp Thompson,” the “young Topeka corn-fed product who has written K-A-N-S-A-S across the war map of Europe.”¹¹ *Chicago Tribune* London bureau chief Charles Wheeler admired “this devil-may-care, easy going, fear immune, quick witted, 120 pounds of human being,” who was “equally at home on a gun carriage or in the swellest hotels of Europe . . . joking with a king or getting joyously drunk with a trooper.”¹² Powell described their first meeting in Antwerp:

He blew into the Consulate wearing an American army shirt,
a pair of British officer’s riding breeches, French puttees, and

⁸ David H. Mould and Gerry Veeder, “The ‘Photographer-Adventurers’: Forgotten Heroes of the Silent Screen,” *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 16 (Fall 1988).

⁹ *Moving Picture World*, February 6, 1915, 812.

¹⁰ Edward Alexander Powell, *Slanting Lines of Steel* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), 46.

¹¹ “Tribune Staff Men Off to War Zones,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 11, 1915, 5.

¹² Charles N. Wheeler, “Kansas Boy Likes the War,” reprinted in *Kansas City Star*, January 29, 1915.

a Highlander's forage cap, and carrying a camera the size of a parlor phonograph. Thompson is a little man, hard as nails, tough as raw-hide, his face perpetually wreathed in what he called his sunflower smile. He has more chilled-steel nerve than any man I know, and before he had been in Belgium a month his name became a synonym throughout the army for coolness and daring.¹³

Thompson's personal life enhanced his maverick image. He went through four marriages, and got into fistfights in hotel rooms and restaurants. He won and lost at the gaming tables,¹⁴ and was once arrested in Chicago for impersonating a naval officer and passing bad checks.¹⁵

Photographers such as Thompson presented themselves as experts on political and military matters. When his films were shown in major cities, Thompson appeared in military uniform (although he held no military rank) and told audiences that armies throughout Europe knew him as "le capitaine Thompson."¹⁶ His souvenirs—passports, letters of authority, and medals—were displayed in the theater lobby, or in the window of a nearby store. He was a showman, often appearing in his own films. This device not only enhanced the film's authenticity—the image proved he was there—but showed its maker in suitable poses, preparing the camera for action, meeting the military brass, donning a gas mask.

World War One was the first major conflict to be covered by motion picture photographers. It was difficult, dangerous work. Thompson had to depend on the armies he worked with for access to the war zone, and faced a military bureaucracy that regarded photographers as, at worst spies and, at best dangerous nuisances. Military censors confiscated his cameras, or took out exposed film and held it up to the light to inspect it. Somehow, Thompson always managed to talk his way out of trouble and resorted to elaborate schemes to smuggle his film back to London or New York.¹⁷ In the war zone, he was subject to military authority—the arm that provided him with food and transportation determined where he travelled, and what he shot. He was in as much danger as a regular soldier, sometimes more, because a camera could be mistaken for a new-fangled gun, and invite an artillery barrage. Several photographers were killed, and others, including Thompson, wounded. Most of his footage was taken behind the lines; it shows military parades and ceremonies, the build-up of troops and supplies, airplanes and observation balloons, artillery barrages, prisoner-of-war camps. The few front-line scenes show a featureless landscape, broken only by the distant explosion of artillery

¹³ Edward Alexander Powell, *Fighting in Flanders* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1916), 13-14.

¹⁴ En route to Russia in early 1917, he claimed to have made \$8,000 on the roulette tables in a Shanghai casino, after starting with a \$120 stake. "That will buy a lot of nice presents for you," he wrote Dot (January 22, 1917).

¹⁵ *Topeka State Journal*, June 5, 1923, 1.

¹⁶ "Thompson Tells Tales of Battle," *Topeka Daily Capital*, December 30, 1915.

¹⁷ Powell, *Fighting in Flanders*, 15; *Kansas City Star*, September 6, 1914.

shells. Indeed, the best times for fighting—in the dark or under smokescreen—were the worst times for photography; when the sun was shining and the light was good, there was not much going on. World War One, as Thompson saw and filmed it, was nothing like the Hollywood version, full of cavalry charges and desperate hand-to-hand combat.¹⁸

During the first year of the war, Thompson shot stills for American and British newspapers and magazines—the *New York World*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, the *London Daily Mail*, the *Illustrated London News*—and film for the major newsreel companies. His early experiences on the Western Front set the tone for the rest of his career. In his attempts to reach the front lines, he was frequently arrested. At the Battle of Mons, he filmed under heavy fire for seven days, was again arrested, and ordered to leave the country. Fearing his film would be confiscated, he persuaded a Russian countess travelling to England to carry it in her baggage. In London, he sold the film to the highest bidder, and then went back to the front.¹⁹ On his return to London, Thompson was hired by the newspaper magnate Lord Northcliffe to go to Germany. They made up a fake newspaper clipping from a non-existent American newspaper, in which Thompson praised the German army in Belgium. He managed to reach Berlin, but a German spy in London tipped off the secret service, and Thompson had to make a quick getaway. He looked up a girlfriend, and proposed they elope; she got a passport for her “brother” and they drove to the border. There, the ungallant Thompson confessed that he was not in love after all, and left her.²⁰

Thomson made his first trip to Russia in 1915. In February, he sailed to Europe with Robert R. McCormick, editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, and Edwin Weigle, a *Tribune* photographer. After a brief stay in England and France, Weigle went to Germany while McCormick and Thompson traveled east via Greece, Bulgaria and Rumania, arriving in Petrograd in early April 1915. McCormick was granted a short audience with Tsar Nicolas II, which he remembered mostly for the pomp and circumstance—the coaches, liveried footmen, uniforms, furniture, paintings of Louis XIV. “I felt like Marco Polo at the court of the Chinese emperor,” he wrote later.²¹ Then the pair travelled to the front in Galicia and the Carpathian Mountains, where in late 1914 the Russians had launched a successful offensive against the Austro-Hungarian army and laid siege to the strategic fortress of Przemysl on the road to Krakow. The fort surrendered in March 1915 with the Russians taking 120,000 prisoners and capturing 1,000 artillery pieces. The victory was short-lived. By the time McCormick and Thompson reached the front, the Russians were facing a combined German-Austrian offensive that ended with victory at the Battle of Gorlice-Tarnow in May. This turned into a strategic retreat, with the Russians withdrawing from Poland, and removing the threat of an

¹⁸ David Mould, *American Newsfilm, 1914-1919: The Underexposed War* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 100-114

¹⁹ Powell, *Fighting in Flanders*, 15.

²⁰ *Topeka Daily Capital*, December 30, 1915; *Donald Thompson in Russia*, xi-xii.

²¹ Robert R. McCormick, *With the Russian Army, Being the Experiences of a National Guardsman* (New York: MacMillan, 1915), 37.

invasion of Germany or Austria-Hungary. The Russians had welcomed the well-connected McCormick, whose father had been U.S. ambassador in Petrograd, as an unofficial U.S. emissary. As Thompson noted: "Mr. McCormick had letters of introduction, passes to every country in Europe, and was received as no other war correspondent has ever been received during this war. Wherever he appeared the government officials went out of their way to assist him."²² McCormick's memoir recounts meetings with politicians, strategy discussions with the General Staff, and lavish dinners with caviar and French wine. Traveling with him, Thompson would have had little opportunity to observe the conditions of the regular troops.

Thompson's footage was released by the *Chicago Tribune* as a feature-length film, *With the Russians at the Front*, in August 1915, followed a week later by the premiere of Weigle's *The German Side of the War*. Neither made any pretense of neutrality. Although the Russian army was in general retreat from Poland, *With the Russians at the Front* portrayed it as a formidable war machine.²³ The *Chicago Tribune* full-page display ads promised exclusive footage:

Positively the only motion pictures taken within Russian lines made under the personal supervision of R.R. McCormick, war correspondent, and Donald C. Thompson, staff photographer. The *Chicago Tribune* received the EXCLUSIVE PERMISSION of the Russian government to photograph the very recent Russian campaigns in the Carpathians, on the Rawka River, at Przemysl, Warsaw. Be an eye-witness of the Russian armies in the field—*under fire*—in the rain-soaked trenches of the Polish front—taking up positions in the mountains. Approach *within a few feet* of the Czar of All the Russias. See that spectacle—the Imperial Guard *in battle before Lomza*.²⁴

Only 23 minutes of the film have survived, and some scenes promoted in the advertising are missing.²⁵ Thompson faced the same logistical problems he had encountered on the Western front—lack of access to the war zone and, even if he reached it, lack of action. Consequently, most of the footage was taken behind the lines. The film opens with Thompson and McCormick posing by a car with a *Chicago Tribune* banner. There are scenes from staff headquarters showing Grand Duke Nicolas, the commander-in-chief, the Tsar reviewing troops, General Aleksey Brusilov, commander of the 8th Army, artillery batteries in action in the Carpathian Mountains, Cossack cavalry on parade, field hospitals and kitchens,

²² *Donald Thompson in Russia*, xii-xiii.

²³ Historians attribute Russia's defeat on the Eastern Front not so much to strategy as to lack of artillery, ammunition and supplies as well as the corruption and incompetence of Russian officers. McCormick refers to the lack of railways as an infrastructure problem, but in the film's titles and in his later memoir, *With the Russian Army*, provides positive assessments of the Russian army and the competence of its officers.

²⁴ *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 22, 1915, 10.

²⁵ A print of the film is in the Film Study Center at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

and refugees. The only “front-line” scene features the Seminovsky Regiment of the Imperial Guard at Lomza. It shows soldiers running past a building and firing from a parapet; some fall back, apparently wounded, and are carried away on stretchers. As McCormick noted, Thompson filmed during a break in the fighting, and all the scenes were staged for the camera.²⁶ Given the difficulty of obtaining combat footage, such staging, with the willing assistance of military officers, was common during World War One. To satisfy audience demand for war footage, Thompson organized infantry to march, cavalry to charge, artillery to fire and airplanes to take off and land.

Like McCormick, Thompson left Russia in 1915 with a positive view of its military command and government. He also made contacts he would use in 1917, including his interpreter, Boris. He was aware of supply problems, commenting later that munitions production had improved. “I find the Russian troops much better equipped now than in 1915, and ammunition is plentiful, artillery ammunition, especially. Shells are stacked up wherever you go” (February 28, 1917). If he was aware of corruption and incompetence in the army, he did not mention them in interviews with the motion picture and popular press. Reflecting on the 1915 trip in the introduction to *Donald Thompson in Russia*, Thompson says that he did not understand why the Russian armies with their “millions of men” did not “push the German army aside and go where they pleased.” The reason, he was told, was German intrigue. A Cossack officer in the Carpathians said Russia was “paying the price” for not locking up its German-born citizens whose bribery and intrigue were undermining the war effort. “Their generals were bought, their ammunition was going astray, and they were losing thousands of men in fruitless battles . . . They caused thousands to die in hospitals, for while millions had been appropriated for field hospitals, German intrigue had diverted that money into other channels.”²⁷

Thompson goes on to attribute most setbacks in the Allied war effort to German intrigue. In Bucharest, Germany had “thousands of spies on her pay-roll”; Serbia was defeated “partly by the devious methods that Germans love and excel in”; in Rome, an Italian officer told him that Italy’s “wonderful army” would be thrown back “because there were too many Germans running loose in the country, doing the dirty work of the Kaiser.” Every Allied country Thompson had visited that “had not locked up its Germans, has since felt the disastrous effect of the Teutonic spy system.”²⁸

While McCormick returned to the U.S. from Russia via Sweden, Thompson traveled south to the Balkans. On July 23, 1915, the U.S. legation in Athens wired McCormick, relaying Thompson’s request for \$500 to travel home. McCormick, already frustrated by Thompson’s cockiness, insubordination and occasional drunkenness, refused. He wired back the next day: “Please take all moving picture apparatus film and cameras from Thompson. Buy him third class ticket

²⁶ The Papers of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, Cantigny Park, Illinois: notes for lecture at film premiere at Studebaker Theater, Chicago.

²⁷ *Donald Thompson in Russia*, xiii-xiv.

²⁸ *Donald Thompson in Russia*, xv-xvi.

to America and give him ten dollars. Don't lend Thompson any money." A week later the legation reported, "Thompson refused your offer. Got money somewhere and left for France with apparatus."²⁹

Thompson spent the next few weeks filming with the Serbian army. By Fall 1915, he was back in France, still posing as a *Tribune* photographer and running up hotel bills that McCormick eventually had to pay. He released his first feature-length film, *Somewhere in France* (the title is an allusion to the censors' ban on revealing place names) in December 1915, then returned to the Balkans where the Allies had opened a new front at Salonika. Then he joined the French army as an official cinematographer; although his status provided access to the front, he had to submit his film for censorship, and claimed he lost 70 per cent of his footage.³⁰ He filmed at the siege of Verdun and Battle of the Somme, where he was wounded. His second feature, the immodestly-titled *War As It Really Is*, was released in December 1916. Its premiere at the Rialto Theater in New York City broke the box office record.³¹ By the end of 1916, Thompson had worked on every front in Europe, claimed to have witnessed 38 battles, and had been wounded three times. His hometown newspaper, the *Topeka Daily Capital*, sponsoring the local premiere of *War As It Really Is*, praised him as "the photographic hero of the war."³²

In December 1916, shortly after the release of *War As It Really Is*, Thompson, on assignment to shoot film for Paramount and stills for *Leslie's*, left Seattle on the liner *Empress of Russia* for Japan, accompanied by *Leslie's Weekly* staff correspondent Florence Harper. He found plenty of evidence to support his German conspiracy thesis on the long journey to Petrograd. On the ship, a Russian army officer told him that intrigue in the Imperial Court had undermined military assistance to Rumania, forcing its armies to retreat and abandon Bucharest (December 12, 1916); in Manila, Thompson filed a libel suit against a newspaper editor who he suspected of being paid by the Germans over an article claiming that Thompson and Harper were impostors (January 5, 1917); Shanghai was "a regular pest-hole for German spies" (January 22); in Peking, he punched a hotel manager when he surprised him going through his baggage and papers (February 14); on the Trans-Siberian Railway, fellow passengers told him that German agents were creating food shortages in Petrograd to foment riots (February 24).

Thompson and Harper worked together for six turbulent months as the country plunged into political and social chaos. They covered the protests and street-fighting of the February Revolution that ended with the Tsar's abdication and the establishment of the Provisional Government, and the abortive Bolshevik coup in July. They travelled to the front line, where discipline was breaking down and

²⁹ The Papers of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, Cantigny Park, Illinois: I-62, Foreign Correspondents, 1914-1955, Box 11, Donald Thompson.

³⁰ "Real Thrills in Battle Pictures," *Moving Picture World*, November 11, 1916, 857.

³¹ "War Films on State Rights from Thompson Company," *Motion Picture News*, December 2, 1916, 3453. For a review of *War As It Really Is*, see "Real Thrills in Battle Pictures," *Moving Picture World*, November 11, 1916, 857. A copy of the film is in the National Archives.

³² *Topeka Daily Capital*, December 21, 1915.

soldiers' committees were being formed. They left Russia in August, missing the main event—the October Revolution.

Thompson sensed that he was in Russia at a historic time. “So far, Dot,” he wrote on March 8, “I have guessed this war to a T. The people can say what they please, but I smell trouble. And thank God I am here to get the photographs of it! If there is a revolution I hope it comes now, for although I should hate to see bloodshed, if it has to be it might as well come while I am on the ground with plenty of film.”³³ On March 18, after the Tsar’s abdication and the declaration of a republic, he wrote: “Just imagine if someone had had the French Revolution in motion pictures! Well, I have thousands of feet of film of the Russian Revolution. I have worked every day and have followed the mobs day and night. I went seventy-two hours without any sleep at all to speak of . . . but I got my film and hundreds of still pictures.”³⁴

His letters recounted daring photographic exploits under fire. With his flair for self-promotion, he may have exaggerated the stories but there is corroboration from other sources, particularly the accounts of newspaper correspondents who worked with him. His closest associate, Harper, wrote articles describing the same incidents, and published a memoir on her Russian experiences, *Runaway Russia*.³⁵ In an article for the London *Daily Mail*, reprinted in American newspapers, she recounted a typical piece of Thompson derring-do during the abortive Bolshevik rising in July:

Tuesday morning the Nevsky was said to be very unsafe, so Thompson piled his camera into a big auto, and said, “Come on.” He was in khaki; on the front seat his orderly and the chauffeur were both in uniform. I wore a blue Italian army cape, so we looked rather military. The tripod of the camera sticking up in the *tonneau* looked not unlike a new kind of gun. In fact it looked so dangerous that it gave us a clear passage up the Nevsky. As we neared the corner of the Liteiny the crowds were thick, and soon the trouble started. The Bolsheviki met the Cossacks, both armed and with machine guns on both sides. Thompson set up the camera and began to crank. One minute the street was a mass of people, the next they had fallen flat to escape the bullets or were running for cover. All the time Thompson cranked away. His coat was off, and strapped to his belt was an Army colt. The chauffeur showed signs of panic. Thompson drew his gun, and said, “You do as I tell you, or you’ll get shot, too.”³⁶

³³ Donald Thompson in *Russia*, 47.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

³⁵ Florence MacLeod Harper, *Runaway Russia* (New York: Century, 1918).

³⁶ “Thompson Risks Life to Film Russian Revolution Scenes,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, September 30, 1917.

Accounts of this incident appear in several sources, delivered in the same kind of breathless prose and with only minor variations in detail; if it seems a little far-fetched, at least everyone was telling the same story.³⁷ This was just one of many incidents recounted by Thompson and Harper, but unfortunately, there are few surviving stills to document them.

Thompson's accounts are rich in detail; he almost always included the date, the time of day, and locations, noting, for example, the direction in which a crowd was moving, or where he was when an incident occurred. Most events happened in central Petrograd, and so, by referring to a map of the city, it is possible to plot the action. However, Thompson's estimates of crowd size are unreliable. Describing a demonstration by women and factory workers on March 8, he noted that the crowd "soon numbered at least 2,000." A week later, on the Liteiny and "found a mob of about a million people, it seemed to me; and this mob was out for blood" (March 18). "There were fully 75,000 people packed in the square in front of the Duma," he reported the next day. "There were half a million people in line, men and women and soldiers" in the May Day Parade, and "in one division 15,000 anarchists." The next day, on the Sadovaia, Thompson and his interpreter Boris "met a mob of about 10,000." He estimated that "about a million people" attended the funeral for Cossack soldiers killed during the abortive July coup. Estimating crowd size is a professional skill, and is best done from a vantage point. At street level, it is virtually impossible to estimate numbers, yet Thompson consistently did so, even when he was lying prone on the ground. Caught in crossfire near the Summer Palace during the abortive coup in July, Thompson and Boris threw themselves to the ground. "We had company, however," wrote Thompson, "between these two points, there must have been between 1,800 and 2,000 people lying flat on the street."³⁸

Thompson spoke only a few words of Russian so relied on his interpreter, Boris, and other English speakers, not only to translate but to interpret events and reports. Of course, Thompson had other sources—fellow journalists and photographers, military officers at the Astoria Hotel, American embassy staff. Harper spoke French, which allowed her to converse with some military officers and government officials. Boris, however, was with Thompson most of the time. On the streets of Petrograd, Boris told him what people were saying, what their banners and signs meant, what the newspapers were reporting.

We know little about Boris, except that he was conscripted into the Russian army in 1916 and wounded on the Rumanian front. He complained to Thompson about lack of munitions and food at the front, and the disorderly retreat. Clearly, Boris was disillusioned with the Tsarist government, and warned Thompson that food shortages and strikes in Petrograd would lead to trouble. He told Thompson that secret police were acting as provocateurs, mingling with the crowds and incit-

³⁷ A similar account of the incident described Thompson's actions as in character. "Americans who saw Mr. Thompson shouted to him that he must be crazy. But he had gone all over Europe taking war pictures and he wasn't going to be balked here." "Lenine Anti-American as Well as Pro-German," *New York Times Magazine*, 8.

³⁸ *Donald Thompson in Russia*, 43, 80, 108, 156, 162, 337, 288.

ing demonstrators to violence and looting to provoke an armed response by the Cossack cavalry or Imperial Guard. On April 4, Boris reported that “German spies are spending money here in Petrograd as they never spent it before” and “thousands of Germans are coming into Russia now from Sweden on forged passports and by bribing officials at the border.”³⁹

Boris was most reliable in reporting what was happening on the streets of Petrograd. His assessments of the political and military situation or the maneuverings between rival factions were more speculative, yet Thompson frequently included them in his letters. “The revolution isn’t two weeks old yet and already they are fighting amongst themselves,” he wrote on March 21. “As things stand now, all are in favor of the republican form of government, such as we have in the United States. I hear through Boris that this is the sentiment in all the large cities.”⁴⁰ Boris told him that most people on the streets had no idea of why they were protesting. “I ran across one mob of 10,000 workmen, 80 per cent. of them armed; when Boris asked a few of them what they were out for, they didn’t know; they only showed him a printed slip, telling them to be at a certain place at a certain time. Take it from me, this Lenin has certainly got these people well trained considering the short time he has been back in Russia.”⁴¹

Just before the abortive Bolshevik coup in July, Thompson wrote that he had “made photographs of Lenin and a man named Trotsky who has come from New York” at the Bolshevik headquarters, the Kschessinskaya Mansion. Lenin is mentioned in three photograph captions in the book. “Lenin addressing a Petrograd mob, Monday, July 16, 1917” and “Lenin’s arrival in Petrograd” are crowd shots in which the Bolshevik leader cannot be identified.⁴² The photograph captioned “Trotsky and Lenine” shows a group of six men and two women, with soldiers in the background.⁴³ Trotsky and Lenin are not identified but part of the photograph, reproduced in the *Illustrated London News*, December 15, 1917, names the men on the far right as Trotsky and Lenin. This image, writes Mike Carey, appeared “in large-circulation journals . . . most often alongside the argument that the two revolutionary leaders were either working for Germany or were even secretly Germans themselves.”⁴⁴

The men pictured are not Trotsky and Lenin, and bear little physical resemblance to them. Few images of the Bolshevik leaders were in circulation at the time, so Thompson’s photograph was accepted for what it purported to be. As his earlier career indicates, Thompson had few qualms about staging and even fak-

³⁹ Ibid., 140.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 123.

⁴¹ Ibid., 181.

⁴² Ibid., 279, 303.

⁴³ Ibid., 173.

⁴⁴ Mike Carey, “Definitely Not Lenin and Trotsky: Donald C. Thompson’s Photographs of 1917,” *European Studies* blog, British Library, January 4, 2016. According to Carey, a French series on Soviet history published in the early 1920s identifies the “Trotsky” figure as Mikhail Martynov, chair of the Kronstadt Soviet, and the “Lenin” figure as Christian Rakovsky, a Bulgarian socialist revolutionary who moved to Petrograd and joined the Bolsheviks in spring 1917.

ing scenes, and he would have known that a picture of the mysterious Bolshevik leaders would be a scoop for *Leslie's*. Yet he may simply have been deceived by Boris or one of Bolsheviks. Or perhaps, as Carey suggest, Lenin and Trotsky were "using body doubles, political decoys." We may never know.

Many of Thompson's letters mixed personal experiences with what he learned, often second or third hand. Almost every day, he heard unconfirmed reports and rumors, and freely admitted that sometimes he did not know what to believe. Soon after his arrival in Petrograd, he wrote: "Boris says a revolution is coming and he has heard that Protopopov has sold Russia to Germany, that he is going to make peace and that there will be lots of food in a few days. I asked him where he got this information and he said he couldn't tell me but that I would hear it from other people."⁴⁵ "The papers are full of what the members of the Duma and the different committees are saying, what they want, and what Russia should have, until you never know what to believe," he wrote on April 4. "It seems that every political party has a paper now. Since Russia is a republic everyone lets off steam."⁴⁶ Shortly before his departure, he wrote: "I hear that Kerensky had a fight with one of the ministers of the cabinet, and that for a while we had no government at all, and that Kerensky had even rushed away to Finland in an automobile. How true this is I don't know, but I do know that all the ministers resigned but later reconsidered and withdrew their resignations."⁴⁷

Despite the rumors and his reliance on Boris and other sources, Thompson correctly interpreted, in his own homespun style, several key issues. He grasped that the future of the February Revolution would be decided in a power struggle between the Provisional Government, backed by the Duma, and the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workmen's Deputies. He described the members of the Soviet as "the orneriest bunch of devils I have ever met. I will bet \$1,000 to a cent that 90 per cent of them cannot read or write, but they are being led by some pretty smart people. They are handing out proclamations every five minutes to appeal to the rabble they represent."⁴⁸ He understood the crucial linking role that Kerensky played as the only political leader to serve both as a minister and an elected member of the Soviet; later, he predicted that the rivalry between Kerensky and General Lavr Kornilov, the army commander-in-chief, would be a deciding factor. However, his deference to royalty (he had met and photographed the Tsar in 1915) clouded his judgment. Learning of the Tsar's abdication, he wrote: "I believe that if he could have been in the city Monday and had driven down the main street of Petrograd, the Nevsky Prospekt, and stood up in the back of his automobile with his hat off and talked, as Teddy Roosevelt would have done, he would still be the Tsar of Russia. He could have had the people with him and all that he would have had to do would have been to grant what the people wanted, to see to it that bread was brought into Petrograd, and to appoint new ministers. . . . As it was, he

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 340.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

did nothing; why, I do not know. Probably because royalty doesn't do things that way."⁴⁹

Thompson reserved his sharpest criticism for Lenin and Trotsky—the two principal villains in the plot. Lenin had returned from exile in Switzerland in April. “Lenin might say that he is not in the pay of the Germans,” he wrote, “but take it from me, Germany is not giving a special car to anyone to travel through Germany and back to Russia who is at war with them.” At the same time, he grudgingly admired Lenin’s political acumen. “Lenin is a brilliant man and is smart enough to know what the poor Russian wants to hear. These poor fellows believe that if Lenin is put in power the war will stop, the land and all the money will be divided amongst them, and they will never have to work again.”⁵⁰ He wrote that Lenin was gaining support, and predicted that if he was not killed or jailed, he would soon be running Russia—a pretty accurate forecast for six months before the October Revolution.

Thompson made several trips to the front line which, after the retreat from Poland, ran roughly north-south—from Riga in Latvia, 300 miles southwest of Petrograd, to northern Rumania. He blamed German propaganda for disaffection and desertion in the army. “The Russian does not really know what he is fighting for,” he wrote. “Nobody had ever told him what the war was about. . . . Now the Russians are leaving the trenches and the camps and wandering over the country trying to find their way back to their homes (most of them don't know how to get back home). They hear about peace, and they know that means they will not have to lie in the trenches this coming winter.” Thompson believed Russia’s generals could restore morale by ordering a new advance. “What Russia needs at the front is a leader, a Napoleon, someone who has the nerve to do things, no matter what the public says or how many mobs appear on the streets of Petrograd.”⁵¹

Thompson returned to the United States in September 1917 as the Allies faced the prospect of Russia’s withdrawal from the war and the collapse of the Eastern Front. The Allies feared that American troops would not arrive on the Western Front in time to stem a new German offensive. With the American press and public concerned by events in Russia, it was tempting to look for villains. The movie industry conveniently provided them in Thompson’s feature-length film, *The German Curse in Russia* (also known as *Blood-Stained Russia*). It was released to enthusiastic reviews in December 1917, the same month that Russia withdrew from the war and the Germans occupied the Ukraine. Its title summarized its theme—that the revolution was a giant conspiracy, fomented by German intrigue, and its leaders, Lenin and Trotsky, were spies and rabble-rousers, hired by the Germans to incite the people. According to *Motion Picture News*, “Every foot of the film helps to visualize for the American people the means that the Germans utilized in Russia to bring about food riots, street fighting and the final overthrow of the government which had been established for them upon a foundation

⁴⁹ Ibid., 114, 117.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 159-160.

⁵¹ Ibid., 195-196.

of freedom and liberty."⁵² Moviegoers were promised "the inside truth about Russia, showing how German intrigue, stopping at nothing, drove the Russian people to revolt and put their armies out of the war."⁵³ *Moving Picture World* told theater managers that *The German Curse in Russia* would play on the patriotic fervor of their patrons, suggesting they hold free performances for schoolchildren and their teachers, and drape the lobby with American and Russian flags.⁵⁴ Thompson was treated as an expert witness, whose views on the situation in Russia should be taken seriously. According to *Picture-Play Magazine*, Thompson felt his mission was not only to observe but to warn. "He realized that he had been doing something more than merely taking war pictures. He saw that within his films lay concealed the pitiful story of how German intrigue had sapped a great nation. And he realized, too, that this story was needed in America as a timely warning."⁵⁵

Did *The German Curse in Russia* live up to its claims? Was it, as its distributor Pathé claimed, "the greatest of all war pictures"? We may never know because the film has apparently been lost.⁵⁶ However, the themes of the film, as reported in the press, are similar to those outlined in *Donald Thompson in Russia* and in Thompson's still photographs. For nine months, from June 1917 to March 1918, *Leslie's* featured full-page or double-page spreads of Thompson's photographs, often with copy by Harper. The headlines played on anti-revolutionary sentiment in the United States—"Bolshevism—Talk, Poverty, Arson and Murder," "The Evil Reign of Russia Bolsheviki," "Bitter Lessons in Bolshevism," "No Peace for Struggling Russia." Some stills appeared in the motion picture trade press, in Thompson's and Harper's books, and in a book of his photographs.⁵⁷ As in Thompson's films, the images do not speak for themselves; it is the titles and captions that provide context and political perspective.

The claims by Thompson and others that German intrigue was the principal cause of the October Revolution were widely aired in the popular press of the United States, and supported by government officials and opinion leaders. In March 1918, Edgar Sisson, an American journalist serving as representative for the Committee on Public Information (CPI) in Petrograd, returned to the United States with documents purporting to show that the Bolshevik regime was a puppet government controlled by the German general staff. The head of the CPI, George Creel, told President Woodrow Wilson that the documents revealed an "amazing record of double dealing and corruption" that would constitute a coup for American propaganda. After a hurried and uncritical review, the government published them under the title, *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy*.⁵⁸ Although many of the

⁵² "Pathé Shows Good War Films," *Motion Picture News*, December 29, 1917, 4535.

⁵³ *Canadian Moving Picture Digest*, February 9, 1918, 14.

⁵⁴ "Advertising Aids for Busy Managers," *Moving Picture World*, January 26, 1918.

⁵⁵ Louis Tenny, "Filming the Trail of the Serpent," *Picture-Play Magazine*, March 1918, 113-14.

⁵⁶ Sadly, no prints of the film appear to have survived although some footage—apparently purchased from Thompson—was re-used in Herman Axelbank's 1937 documentary compilation, *From Tsar to Lenin*.

⁵⁷ *Blood-Stained Russia* (New York: Leslie-Judge Co., 1918).

⁵⁸ George Creel to Wilson, May 9, 1918, Box 2, Creel Papers, Library of Congress.

documents were later shown to be forgeries, they made excellent propaganda, providing a suitably dastardly explanation for Russia's departure from the war. The simple conspiracy theory provided a convenient fiction to explain a series of events that Americans found confusing and threatening. Thompson's views were shared by many other Americans.

Thompson did not believe that this regime of revolutionaries and German spies could last long, and he expected a counter-revolution. "The thing that will conquer Lenin and his Bolsheviki," he said in March 1918, "is an army from outside Petrograd, an army that really represents Russia."⁵⁹ That army soon appeared, as counter-revolutionary White forces attacked Bolshevik forces in Siberia. The Allies sent an expeditionary force to support the White Armies, and Thompson landed at Vladivostok ready to film the triumphal advance to

Petrograd. It never happened. The White armies were too busy arguing among themselves to mount a concerted offensive, and the Allied force was unable to advance from Vladivostok. Thompson spent several frustrating months filming military parades and relief efforts for refugees. The Allied force was withdrawn in late 1919, but Thompson's experience only served to confirm his opinions; photographs of the Allied force and the White Armies, published in *Leslie's Weekly*, provided what he judged to be further proof of German intrigue and the evils of Bolshevism.⁶⁰

Details of Thompson's postwar career are sketchy. In 1920, he left for a year's tour of the Far East, with a commission from the magazine *Asia* to shoot stills and motion pictures of native life in 15 countries, from Mongolia to Borneo.⁶¹ He settled in Hollywood, and married for the third time. Throughout the 1920's and 1930's, he worked as a freelancer, selling topical films and travelogues. In 1927, he travelled to the Philippines and China, accompanied by his new wife, Maria. He dutifully recorded the usual travelogue scenes, such as the Great Wall and the Summer Palace in Peking, and then began work on a more controversial subject—the Chinese drug trade. The British authorities in Hong Kong, who quietly permitted the drug traffic, did not want a film exposé, and Thompson became an unwelcome visitor. They confiscated some of his film, but he held onto enough footage to produce a topical feature on the drug traffic and opium addiction.⁶²

In the 1930's, Thompson filmed the Japanese invasion of China, the German occupation of Austria, the Italian campaign in Ethiopia, and the Spanish Civil War. Visiting St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1937, the "adventurer-correspondent" described meetings with Hitler and Mussolini, and offered a comparison of how they handled the foreign press. The "unsmiling fuehrer," said Thompson, seemed

See George T. Blakey, *Historians on the Homefront: American Propagandists for the Great War* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 98-105.

⁵⁹ *Topeka Journal*, March 6, 1918.

⁶⁰ About 75 photographs are in the Red Cross Collection at the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

⁶¹ *Topeka State Journal*, July 10, 1920.

⁶² Interview with Thompson's relative, Lester William Burton, of Topeka, Kansas, April 1982. Some still photographs from the China trip are in the Donald Thompson file at the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

ill at ease, but Mussolini was “a born showman” who got on well with the correspondents.⁶³ Thompson said he was planning to leave for China to cover the Nationalist government’s resistance to the Japanese. This may have been his last foreign adventure; his photographs of the Japanese attack on Shanghai have been preserved, but no film or stills shot after this time have been found. He seems to have retired before the beginning of World War Two and died in southern California in July 1947.⁶⁴

[Note: This article, a new introduction to the re-publication of *Donald Thompson in Russia*, forthcoming from Slavica Publishers in its series on *Americans in Revolutionary Russia* is included here by permission of the author and the press.

David H. Mould, a British-born journalist, is professor emeritus of media studies at Ohio University. His *American Newsfilm, 1914-1919* (Routledge, 1984), featuring Thompson, was republished in 2014. In recent years he has traveled extensively in Madagascar and Central Asia. A book on the latter, *Postcards from Stanland*, was published last year by Ohio University Press. A lecture, “Images of World War One: The Films of Pioneer Kansas Photographer Donald Thompson” was very well received at the University of Kansas last month. Norman Saul]

⁶³ “Man Who Has Interviewed Dictators Gives Views Here,” *St. Joseph* (Missouri) *Gazette*, April 7, 1937. See also *Wichita Eagle*, May 17, 1936.

⁶⁴ California Death Index, Los Angeles County, state file number 47-52543.

Book Reviews

Louis Sell, *From Washington to Moscow: US-Soviet Relations and the Collapse of the USSR*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. 408 pp. \$27.95, Paper.

In his long career as a Foreign Service expert on Soviet and Balkan affairs, Louis Sell served in many important positions, including as the Moscow embassy's liaison to Soviet human rights activists in the 1970s, as a member of a State Department working group on Poland during the crisis of 1980-81, on the US delegation to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty talks later in the 1980s, and as an informal contact with Chechens from 1991 to 1994. Drawing on his diverse experiences as well as extensive research in published sources, Sell has written an engaging, highly readable account of US-Soviet relations from the 1970s to the early 1990s. Although the title suggests that the book focuses more narrowly on the years that brought the demise of the Soviet Union, Sell actually begins with his first visit to the USSR as a student in 1967, when he tried to smuggle rubles into the country in his sock. He then presents concise, well-informed discussions of Soviet domestic developments in the Brezhnev era, lucid treatments of relations between the superpowers during the presidencies of Nixon, Ford, and Carter, and then more detailed description of U.S.-Soviet interaction in the 1980s. By interspersing recollections of episodes he observed in his broader narrative, Sell succeeds in presenting a story that will appeal to non-academic readers and give academic specialists some new information and insights.

Sell's explanation of the collapse of the USSR is multifaceted and convincing. Contrary to American triumphalist mythology, he argues that Ronald Reagan's policies were not a major factor in the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Although the Soviet military was initially alarmed by Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), by 1987 the Kremlin became convinced that SDI could not be deployed before the end of the century and decided to focus on relatively inexpensive countermeasures. Thus, SDI did not "spend the USSR into oblivion" (p. 335). The USSR also was not brought down by mass unrest and "national separatism was at least as much a symptom as cause of the Soviet dissolution" (p. 322). While the growth rate of the inefficient and hyper-militarized centrally planned economy drastically declined in the 1970s and 1980s, the economic system could have staggered along "for some time" (p. 325). Most important, then, were the ways systemic weaknesses were exacerbated by mistakes made by Mikhail Gorbachev and his advisers, including: the anti-alcohol campaign that severely re-

duced state revenue; the reduction of fear and coercion, which led to even lower labor productivity; and the decentralization of economic decision-making without a bold plan for transition to a market economy. Additionally, the ending of the state's monopoly of information through the halting of jamming of foreign broadcasts and the increase in foreign travel undermined what remained of faith in the superiority of socialism over capitalism.

While Sell's treatments of earlier phases are generally sound, some of his statements may be questioned. Did the USSR aid North Vietnam "to humiliate the United States" (p. 9)? If Richard Nixon's policies toward the USSR "ultimately failed" (p. 41), should that be blamed primarily on Nixon's secretive diplomacy or should it be attributed more to congressional interference? Did Reagan really win Soviet respect by firing U.S. air traffic controllers in 1981 (p. 145)? Or did Soviet leaders in the early 1980s loathe Reagan as a reactionary warmonger? Should the anti-nuclear activists of the 1980s be dismissed as naïve, pro-Soviet advocates of unilateral disarmament (p. 149)? Or did such activists and citizen diplomats make significant contributions to the ending of the Cold War, as Matthew Evangelista and David Cortright have argued in books that are not in Sell's bibliography? Was Soviet spying in the United States much more "egregious" (p. 219) than American spying in the Soviet Union, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s, when the U.S. obtained so many valuable Soviet agents that the era was "a disaster for the KGB" (p. 213)?

Although some readers may disagree with Sell about such questions, *From Washington to Moscow* is a valuable and enjoyable book, founded on broad research and enlivened by vivid anecdotes.

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Lee A. Farrow. *Alexis in America. A Russian Grand Duke's Tour, 1871 – 1872*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 2014.

Для того, чтобы привлечь внимание американцев в последней трети XIX века, можно было быть великим композитором или художником, изобрести новую машину или добиться успеха в политике, а можно было быть членом российской императорской семьи, впервые посетившим Америку. История феерического путешествия великого князя Алексея по США в 1870-1871 годах, рассказанная профессором университета Оберн в Монтгомери Ли А.Фэрроу, сама по себе заслуживает того, чтобы ее прочесть.

Четвертый сын императора Александра II попал в Соединенные Штаты по личным причинам. У девятнадцатилетнего великого князя Алексея случился роман с фрейлиной Александрой Жуковской, дочерью знаменитого поэта, которой шел тогда двадцать восьмой год. Алексей Александрович, по общепринятому мнению, тайно женился на Жуковской (нет точных сведений, когда и где: по одним сведениям в Италии, по другим—в русской

православной церкви в Женеве), но брак был не одобрен императором и расторгнут Синодом, так как Александра не была ему ровней. По другим сведениям, отношения между Александрой Васильевной и великим князем ограничились внебрачной связью (хотя в письмах он называл ее женой). Когда в семье узнали, что Александра беременна, император отправил сына на два года в кругосветное плавание, а Жуковскую выслали за границу. 26 ноября 1871 года Александра родила в Зальцбурге сына великого князя, названного в честь отца Алексеем.

Алексей Александрович принял участие в военно-морской экспедиции под командованием адмирала Посыета в должности старшего вахтенного офицера на фрегате «Светлана» (изошренное решение, если вспомнить, что само это имя придумал отец возлюбленной Алексея Василий Жуковский). Экспедиция стартовала 20 августа 1871 года.

Самой значительной частью путешествия была поездка по Соединенным Штатам Америки. В декабре 1871 года Алексей высадился в Нью-Йорке, откуда направился в Бостон, а затем в Вашингтон. В американской столице его встретила холодная встреча с президентом Улиссом Грантом (причиной были некоторые дипломатические разногласия), но восторженный прием рядовых американцев. В честь первого настоящего «русского принца», посетившего США, устраивались балы и гала-представления, обеды и ужины.

Алексей умел нравиться. «Он отличался атлетическим телосложением и сочетал силу с бесконечным обаянием, что было особым даром некоторых Романовых предыдущих поколений»,— писал о нем русский мемуарист. В ответ американцы, которых впервые посетил «настоящий» русский принц, изошрялись в гостеприимстве, сочиняли оды и шуточные стихи в его честь.

Из столицы Алексей направился на Дальний Запад. Он оказался в Чикаго вскоре после ужасного пожара 1871 года. В конце января 1872 года Алексей уже был в Небраске, где для него организовали настоящую охоту на бизонов. В «царской» охоте участвовали сам знаменитый охотник Буффало Билл (Уильям Коди), победитель индейцев генерал Джордж Кастер и герой гражданской войны генерал Филип Шеридан, а также несколько вождей племени сиу (в тот момент находившихся в мире с американцами), включая Крапчатого Хвоста. Алексей собственноручно (из пистолета, как писали газеты) убил бизона, а возможно, и нескольких.

Через несколько лет, в 1876 году, генерал Кастер погибнет в битве при Литтл Бигхорн против индейцев. Но за пять лет до этого они мирно охотились вместе с сыном царя-освободителя. Буффало Билл позднее, в том же 1872 году, организует шоу «Дикий запад Буффало Билла», давшее начало коммерческому использованию образа ковбойского фронтира.

А российского царевича в 1872 году повезли дальше по Америке. Он посетил Мамонтову пещеру в Кентукки и выступил перед законодательной властью штата Канзас в Топеке, в Мемфисе Алексей встретился и пообщался с бывшим президентом Конфедерации Джефферсоном Дэвисом. После этого на пароходе Алексей спустился вниз по течению Миссисипи до Нового Орлеана, где попал на карнавал и был избран там «королем Марди

Гра». Именно с участия Алексея берет начало традиция избирать «короля карнавала» (Rex of Mardi Gras). Наконец, через три месяца после прибытия в США Алексей добрался до Пенсаколы, где его дожидалась русская эскадра, и продолжил плавание.

После отплытия Алексея с русской эскадрой воспоминания о его поездке еще долго были частью семейных и местных историй. Ли Фэрроу показывает, как множество людей, собиравшихся в своих маленьких городках посмотреть на великого князя, покупали его фотографии, а потом рассказывали об этом визите своим детям и внукам. Люди, причастные к организации поездки, писали о ней мемуары, и факт их участия попадал в их некрологи спустя десятилетия. Кроме того, Алексей раздавал подарки и денежные пожертвования с царской щедростью. Современные исследователи оценили стоимость подарков, оставленных Алексеем, в 750 тысяч современных долларов.

Вождь Крапчатый Хвост получил в подарок сумку с серебряными долларами, а Национальный музей естественной истории в Вашингтоне до сих пор хранит скелет одного из убитых великим князем буффало. Маленький городок в Илинойсе, носивший имя Александр, переименовался в Алексис после визита великого князя. В Нью-Йорке Алексей посетил театр, который тут же переименовали в «Оперу Великого князя» (Grand Duke Opera House). Во многих городках по пути следования Великого князя сочинялись не только стихи, но и специальная музыка к его приезду. Так, появилось два разных «Марша принца Алексея», один в Филадельфии, другой в Нью-Йорке. В Бруклине сочинили «Галоп Великого князя Алексея», а в Нью-Йорке «Галоп принца Алексея». Филадельфия представила и «Вальс принца Алексея» (мелодии с подобными названиями продолжали писать еще некоторое время и после его отъезда). Гостиницы, в которых останавливался Алексей, долго использовали это событие как главный козырь в своей рекламе. Когда эти дома (и пароходы) спустя десятилетия пускались под снос или сдавались в утиль, газеты неизменно упоминали, что «в этом доме спал (танцевал, смотрел представление) Великий князь Алексей».

Александра Жуковская вышла замуж в 1875 году за саксонского полковника, барона Кристиана Генриха фон Вёрмана, российского подданного, ее сын от Алексея получил фамилию Белёвский-Жуковский. Алексей так и не женился, хотя романов заводил множество.

В июле 1881 года во время «чистки», устроенной Александром III кадрам своего отца, Алексей занял пост главного начальника флота и Морского ведомства. В этом качестве он больше всего запомнился неудачным командованием флотом во время русско-японской войны. Именно он был одним из организаторов похода эскадры адмирала Рождественского вокруг Африки и Азии, закончившегося Цусимой. После этого Алексей подал в отставку, уехал в Париж, где и скончался в 1908 году.

Книга Ли Фэрроу является вкладом в несколько предметных областей исторической науки. Во-первых, она впервые с такой массой деталей и подробностей анализирует важный эпизод из истории российско-

американских отношений. Визит Алексея в Соединенные Штаты попадал в труды историков и раньше, но чаще всего в примечания. Теперь путешествие русского великого князя прослежено по дням и по событиям. Конечно же, это не история международных отношений в ее классическом виде,— среди источников Ли Фэрроу нет дипломатических архивов, а постановка проблемы не адресует читателя напрямую к российско-американским отношениям. Однако с точки зрения конструктивиста очень важно понять механизмы формирования образа другой страны, процессы, приведенные в действие большой поездкой великого князя, в американском обществе. Ли Фэрроу задает и предлагает ответы на важные вопросы о причинах популярности члена императорской семьи в республиканском обществе американской глубинки.

Во-вторых, книгу о путешествии Великого князя Алексея по Америке надо прочесть исследователям проблем исторической памяти и ее функционирования. Пожалуй, впервые проблематика формирования и сохранения социальной памяти о конкретном событии прослежена на таком обширном материале—географически (путь следования Алексея) и хронологически (несколько десятилетий после его отъезда). Известны подобные исследования крупных событий, изменивших жизнь всего общества,—таких как революции и мировые войны. Но очевидно отличие избранного автором примера от случая социального потрясения,—здесь менялась именно память, а не образ жизни и структура социума. Именно поэтому книга существенно дополняет литературу о социальной памяти.

Наконец, книга Ли Фэрроу написана очень живым языком и увлекательна в качестве литературы. В период, когда в России (и, в меньшей мере, в США) авторы исторических монографий теряют контакт с публикой, ориентируясь исключительно на коллег, Ли Фэрроу сумела написать книгу, которая будет интересна читателю без специального образования. Возможно, именно для того, чтобы сохранить этот контакт с читателем, автор не включила в текст книги теоретическую главу, в которой она могла бы обратиться к методологическим проблемам истории российско-американских отношений или исторической памяти,—читателю-профессионалу приходится додумывать и реконструировать такую главу в своем воображении.

В целом же книга Ли Фэрроу о поездке великого князя Алексея в США в 1871-1872 годах стала важным событием в нашем исследовательском поле. К ней, безусловно, будут обращаться ученые, студенты и публика, пытающаяся разобраться в истории российско-американских отношений и становления американской идентичности в период после окончания Гражданской войны.

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Susanna Rabow-Edling, *Married to the Empire: Three Governors' Wives in Russian America, 1829-1864*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2015.

The rough and tumble beginnings of Russia's far frontier in Northwest America is described in *Empire Maker: Aleksandr Baranov and Russian Colonial Expansion into Alaska and Northern California* by Kenneth N. Owens with Alexander Petrov (University of Washington Press, 2015). Baranov, of clearly Russian origin, spent twenty years establishing the foundations of a colony based on a fur hunting system that provided income for construction and administration of a territory that extended into northern California.

Whereas Baranov and other early Russian settlers depended on natives for companionship and work force, his successors as colonial administrators were required by the Russian America Company to marry and take wives with them for the five year term of service in Alaska. The husbands, in contrast to Baranov, were mostly non-Russian subjects of the tsar and served as naval officers, both before and after their company service.

The three wives in this book had common backgrounds: Lutheran religion, totally non-Russian though of mixed national origin, devotion to their husbands, and resident of Russian Baltic territories. As portrayed skillfully by Rabow-Edling, they suffered through separation from families, difficult journeys, a sometimes hostile environment, and a number of child births and deaths. Yet they endured and survived—and left their mark on the land they would leave behind.

Elizabeth de Rossillon (Mrs. Ferdinand) von Wrangell (1810-1854) had perhaps the most difficult experience, traveling overland through Siberia with a baby at only 19, establishing a family life in a still frontier outpost (1830-35), bearing her husband nine children (five surviving childhood) and dying prematurely to leave her husband to care for them.

Margaretha Sundval (Mrs. Adolph) Etholen (1814-1894) went by sea, on an imperial naval ship, from the Baltic, around South America to her new home in Sitka that by this time, 1840, would be somewhat more comfortable. She devoted much energy to establishing a Lutheran church and community in the colony.

Anna von Schoutz (Mrs Hampus) Furuhjelm (1836-1894) had a new, easier route in 1859 to her new residence: New York, Panama, and San Francisco by commercial steamship. By this time Sitka was a bustling, cosmopolitan town with regular communication with the Pacific coast, Asia, and Europe.

Besides being the biography of women in frontier situations, the book is also a history of a territory in transition, as many other regions (such as the American West), to settlement and modernity. A major contribution of the author is in finding the detail through memoirs, letters, diaries, and collateral material that describes women's lives in this remote land.

The book is hampered by some confusion in small details: was it Dr. Mayer or Dr. Meyer who accompanied the von Wrangells? did the Etholens leave from Kronstad or Kronstadt?

Contemporaries viewed Sitka as more like St. Petersburg than many other provincial Russian cities, and Dr. Alexander Frankenhauser in the 1840s com-

pared it favorably to his own home town, Vyborg. At least some credit for this should go to three venturesome women who were devoted to husbands committed to serving the Russian empire.

Norman Saul
University of Kansas

Field Notes

Lee Farrow

Exactly 150 years ago this March, Russia and the United States concluded a treaty that transferred Russian America—Alaska—to the United States for \$7.2 million. In 2014, the Alaska State Legislature passed a resolution recognizing the significance of the event, “requesting that the Alaska Historical Commission coordinate events; and inviting Alaska communities, schools, universities, libraries, museums, businesses, civic and historical groups, and government agencies to participate in and support commemorative activities and events.”¹ Subsequently, in October 2016, Governor Bill Walker proclaimed 2017 “The Alaska Year of History and Heritage” and encouraged all Alaskans to use the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the purchase “to study, teach, reflect upon our past, and apply its lessons to a brighter, more inclusive future.”² Not surprisingly, there are many events planned in Alaska and elsewhere to celebrate the sesquicentennial, including plays, museum exhibitions, lectures, panel discussions, commemorations ceremonies, and special anniversary curriculum for school children. The state’s historic commission has assisted these efforts by providing over two dozen grants to help fund the various commemorative activities. Other organizations, such as the Alaska Historical Society and the Office of History and Archaeology, as well as the Interpretation and Education Program of Alaska State Parks, have contributed to the planning and coordination of events as well, and Alaska Airlines has assisted with travel support. The end result is an impressive calendar of activities created and supported by a large community of Alaskans coming together for the purpose of marking an important historic event and highlighting their state’s uniqueness and cultural diversity and richness.³

The celebration of the sesquicentennial kicks off with a special publication entitled, “150 Reasons We Love Alaska.” Under the coordination of the Alaska

¹ Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 17, Alaska State Legislature House State Affairs Standing Committee, April 3, 2014, located online at <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/pdf/28/M/HSTA2014-04-030806.PDF> and <http://dnr.alaska.gov/Assets/uploads/DNRPublic/parks/oha/grant/scr17.pdf> [Accessed February 19, 2017].

² Proclamation of Alaska Governor Bill Walker, October 17, 1867, located online at <https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2016/10/the-alaska-year-of-history-and-heritage/> [Accessed February 19, 2017.]

³ Brochure entitled, “1860s Alaska,” distributed by the Office of History & Archaeology, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, 2017; Alaska Historical Society webpage, <http://alaskahistoricalociety.org/about-ahs/150treaty/calendar/> [Accessed February 6, 2017].

Historical Society, this booklet will feature short essays solicited from primarily residents of Alaska enumerating the ways in which their state is noteworthy and special. There will also be a traveling exhibition of Emanuel Leutze's painting of the purchase of Alaska. Painted in 1867 shortly after the event, the painting mistakenly includes Charles Sumner who was not present at the signing, but is an important artifact of the history of the treaty. As such, it will be on display throughout the year, traveling to Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Juneau.

Several other exhibitions are being created for the anniversary as well. The "Polar Bear Garden," a new exhibit that highlights the links and similarities between Russia and the United States throughout history and up to the present day, will be on view at the Anchorage Museum for much of the year. The special display will feature the actual treasury check for the Alaska Purchase on loan from the National Archives, as well as the U. S. copy of the treaty signed by Seward. In October, it will be joined by a show entitled, "Perceptions: The Alaska Treaty of Cessions Intercurrent." Held at the International Gallery of Contemporary Art in Anchorage, this show will present interpretations of the treaty by historians, writers, artists, and performers. Similarly, the University of Alaska's Museum of the North in Fairbanks will be the site of a special exhibit entitled "Lifeways in Interior Alaska in the 1860s." Finally, in an effort to educate Alaska's youth about its history, the Anchorage School District also is releasing a special curriculum focusing on the transfer and its significance. Anchorage school teachers from all grade levels participated in various meetings and trainings and then created a set of lessons and educational materials that can be adapted for use with students of all ages. These materials are being shared with teachers across the state.

The calendar of commemorative events will also include lectures, panel discussions, and conferences. Three projects deserve particular attention: the celebration of Seward's Day in Washington, D.C.; the dedication of a statue of William Seward; and, the annual Alaska Day festivities in Sitka. On March 30, 2017, the nation's capital was the site of three events to honor William Seward and his important achievement. Members of the Alaska Historic Commission hosted a luncheon at the National Press Club which included a brief presentation by Alaska Historical Commission member Jonathan Ross on the importance of Seward in the history of Alaska. This was followed by a reception at the Diplomatic Reception Rooms at the State Department and a concert at the William G. McGowan Theater in the National Archives by Wild Shore New Music, a group that fosters collaborations between living composers, the nation's finest classically-trained musicians, and the extraordinarily creative artists and residents of Alaska.

Another project of note is the unveiling, transporting, and dedication of a statue of William Seward. Several years ago, John Venables, a historical reenactor who frequently played the part of William Seward at celebrations of Alaska Day and Seward's Day, began to push for the erection of a statue of Seward in Juneau and even held a groundbreaking ceremony in October 2013. But before Venables could see his dream come to fruition, he passed away in 2015. By this point, however, the statue was already being designed by David Rubin of Ketchikan and his sister Judith Rubin of Boston, and the Seward commemorative statue committee

was determined to pursue Venables's mission and to plan the events associated with the statue's unveiling and dedication. There was some discussion during the design phase about whether Seward should be portrayed as he really looked, with a significant scar on the lower part of his face a reminder of how narrowly he escaped death in the same assassination plot that killed Abraham Lincoln. (Seward was attacked in bed in his own home, where he was recovering from an accident.) The statue committee decided to include the scar. The six-foot bronze statue will be placed on a four foot high block of Alaska Tokeen Marble which itself will sit on a one foot high concrete foundation. The statue will be unveiled in May at the Seward House Museum in Auburn, New York, and then will travel across country to its new home in the courthouse plaza directly across from the capitol building in Juneau, Alaska.

The third major event to commemorate the purchase will occur in October, with a multi-day celebration of Alaska Day in Sitka. Alaska Day marks the anniversary of the transfer of Russian America to the United States on October 18, 1867, and the city has marked this special day for a century. This year, the Alaska Day celebration will be significantly more extensive. On October 13th, the New Archangel Dancers, a troupe of local women are scheduled to perform authentic Russian and Ukrainian dances in brightly colored costumes. A conference of Tlingit tribes and clans will open that day as well. This biennial event explores the culture of indigenous peoples of Southeast Alaska with participation by Alaska native tradition bearers, elders, and fluent speakers of indigenous languages. This year, it will also highlight the perspectives of Alaska Natives toward the Alaska Purchase. The following days will feature a Sitka Historical Society Brew Cruise and Brew Festival, a ball, a performance of shape note singers, and the annual Alaska Day parade. There will also be a speaker's series that will include lectures and panel discussion by historians and local writers.⁴

The sesquicentennial of the Alaska Purchase is an important event in the history of the United State in general, and in the history of Russian-American relations. In this moment when the interactions between Russia and the United States are being carefully scrutinized, it is even more critical to study the history of this long and complicated relationship.

⁴ Much of this article was based on information obtained by telephone or email correspondence with various individuals associated with the commemorative events.

Institute of Historical Research , University of London**The Russian Revolution–Centenary Lecture Series**

(From announcement in *London Review of Books*)

21 February 2017: “The February Revolution: Eight Days in Petrograd”, Peter Waldron (University of East Anglia)

21 March 2017: “Children of Revolution: Armageddon Experienced?”, Catriona Kelly (University of Oxford)

25 April 2017: “Lenin and Leninism: A Centenary Perspective”, James Ryan (Cardiff University)

23 May 2017: “Kaleidoscopes of Revolution: Regional Approaches to Russia’s Revolutionary Period”, Sarah Badcock (University of Nottingham)

20 June 2017: “Kerensky and His Cult”, Boris Kolonitskii (European University, St. Petersburg)

26 September 2017: “Living the Revolution: Inventing a Socialist Lifestyle”, Andy Willimott (University of Reading)

24 October 2017: “The Meaning of October 1917 a Hundred Years on”, Steve Smith (University of Oxford)

21 November 2017: “Reflection on 1917”, panel discussion

All the above events begin at 6:00 p.m. and are followed by refreshments in the Wolfson Room 1 of the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, University of London.

For information on tickets, etc.: ihr.events@sas.ac.uk

Americans in Revolutionary Russia is focused on bringing back into print the observations and experiences of Americans who were witnesses to war and revolution in Russia between 1914 and 1921. There were numerous accounts by Americans from a variety of perspectives. These men and women offer a rich perspective on the tumultuous events that gripped Russia during this time. Most of these books have not been republished since they were first issued a hundred years ago. This series offers new editions of these works with an expert introduction, textual notation, and an index. The first two volumes - *Princess Julia Cantacuzene Countess Speransky nee Grant, Russian People: Revolutionary Recollections*, edited and annotated by Norman E. Saul and Albert Rhys Williams, *Through the Russian Revolution*, edited and annotated by William Benton Whisenhunt have been published. More volumes will appear later in 2017 and beyond. Visit https://slavica.indiana.edu/series/Americans_in_Revolutionary_Russia for more details.

Americans in Revolutionary Petrograd International Conference
6-7 October, 2017
European University at St. Petersburg

Revolutionary Russia attracted many Americans, from left-wing activists to journalists to government employees and other officials who traveled to Petrograd and beyond Russian capital in 1917 and subsequent years, met many leading figures of Russian political, military and social stage and even participated in the revolutionary events. Bolshevik leaders seem to have special hopes for the American connections, as many considered the USA the model state born by revolution, and because America was a fresh member of European political alliances that could make a difference for the new Russia's future path. That role of the Americans in the Russian revolution, be it observers or active participants is understudied in both Russian and American scholarship, due to the ideological biases of the Cold War, the role of the October revolution as the foundational myth of the Soviet State and restricted access to the sources. Nowadays, however, many of those obstacles are lifted, and new opportunities have emerged.

The goal of the conference is to share the findings of Russian and American scholars on the history of Americans in the revolutionary Petrograd. The event will feature the leading researchers of the theme from both Russia and the United States and become the focus of the Russian-American commemoration of the centennial of the Russian revolution in St. Petersburg.

Two exciting panels will be held at the 49th Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) in Chicago on November 9-12, 2017. The first panel will be "Revolutionary Days Revisited: Commemorating the Russian Revolution at the New York Public Library, Columbia University and Slavica Publishers" featuring Susan Smith-Peter, William Benton Whisenhunt, Tanya Chebotarev, and Matt Miller. The second panel will be "Americans Recall the Bolshevik Revolution" featuring Norman E. Saul, Lee Farrow, Matt Miller, William Benton Whisenhunt, and Olga Porshneva.