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*Darya Kuchmiy,
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University
ORCID ID: 0009-0007-2835-3261*

German traveler and researcher Johann Georg Kohl and his notes about Ukraine and Lviv

Abstract. Western European Ukrainian studies contain valuable, extensive, and significant information about Ukraine in the works of the German traveler and researcher Johann Georg Kohl (1808 – 1878), who was one of the most famous German travelers, a geographer, and founder of anthropogeography, a writer-researcher, historian-cartographer, and librarian-law scholar.

The outstanding German scholar Johann Georg Kohl, who traveled through Ukraine in the middle of the 19th century, left vivid records for posterity about culture and everyday life, customs and rituals, work and leisure, cultural and everyday relationships, the history and traditions of the Ukrainian people, the economy, commodity production, and trade of Ukraine of that period. All this is valuable for historical science and complements our knowledge of the history of Ukraine in the 19th century.

Keywords: Johann Georg Kohl, travel notes, Ukraine, Lviv, the middle of the 19th century.

The inquisitive researcher Johann Georg Kohl was the author of numerous works about various countries in Europe and America, in particular about Ukraine, which he crossed in 1838 from Odesa to Kharkiv and from Kharkiv to Przemyśl (now Przemyśl, Poland) (Kulynich, 1993; 2007).

The scholar's life was exciting, and his activities were very fruitful.

Johann Georg Kohl was born into a wine merchant's family in Bremen, Germany, where he graduated from the gymnasium and died there. He studied law at the universities of Göttingen, Heidelberg, and Munich. The need to earn a living and a desire to travel forced him to work as a home tutor in the Baltics (Courland) from 1830 to 1836, where he traveled extensively, and via the Russian capital, he traveled to Ukraine, keeping meticulous travel notes (Kulynich, 1993; 2007. Panchuk, 2009).

At the end of 1837, Johann Georg Kohl arrived in Kharkiv. The scholar paid great attention to Ukraine, traveled to many cities, and provided information on the history and ethnography of the Ukrainian people. He described Ukrainian customs, everyday life, the appearance of towns and villages, houses, and Ukrainian nature. He drew attention to the singing of Ukrainians, whom he called "the most singing people in the world". Researcher left his impressions of administrative, educational, commercial institutions, churches of the cities of Kharkiv, Poltava, Chernihiv, Kremenchuk, Mykolaiv, Odessa, Belgorod, Yalta, Alushta, Sevastopol, Simferopol, Bakhchisarai, several towns of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Galicia (Kulynich, 1993; 2007.; Panchuk, 2009.; Brytskiy, Bochan, 2011: 66-124).

While traveling through the southern regions of the Russian Empire, the observant traveler kept records of his impressions, based on which he published in 1841 in Germany the books "Journey to Southern Russia. Ukraine. Little Russia", "Journey through Russia and Poland.

Bukovina, Galicia, Krakow and Moravia” (Kohl, 1841), where he spoke about the political, socio-economic and cultural situation of Ukraine, natural conditions, and described in detail individual regions of Ukraine. The works contain a lot of information about the economy and culture of Ukraine, everyday life and customs, highly appreciate the beauty and richness of Ukrainian historical songs and poems, and provide basic data on the history of Ukraine from the 11th to the 18th centuries. The scholar emphasized the ethnic unity of the Ukrainians of the Dnieper region, Galicia, Bukovina, and Transcarpathia. (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2011: 89).

In his travel notes on Ukraine, Johann Georg Kohl noted the beauty and elegance of the Ukrainian people, that Ukrainians live in beautiful houses, they are not satisfied with washing their homes, as in Holland, but also whitewash them with lime every two weeks, which is why their houses look like freshly washed linen. The traveler noticed that Ukrainian girls weave wreaths from flowers in their gardens every Sunday and braid them on their heads, which is why they look like princesses. That slender Ukrainian girls love flowers very much and decorate their hair with them even on weekdays, which is why they look like vestal virgins of the goddess Flora. That Ukrainian women in complete bloom love to sing and sing like nightingales while working in the fields; that Ukrainians dress very decently; they take great care of the cleanliness and health of their bodies (Prokopiv, 2023).

The observations, political intuition, and prophetic forecast of Johann Georg Kohl during his journey through the lands of the former Het'manschyny and Slobids'koyi Ukraine in 1838 are impressive. He wrote about the future of the Ukrainian people, that one day the massive Muscovite Empire will collapse, and Ukraine will again become a free and independent state, which is slowly but surely approaching. He emphasized that Ukrainians are a nation with their rich history, melodious language, with their own ancient Christian culture, and with glorious, heroic traditions, that the main force of Ukraine is the numerous lower nobility that lives in the villages of Little Russia, and from which its saviors have always come. He argued that although Ukraine is divided among its neighbors, the material for building a Ukrainian state is ready, that if not today, then tomorrow a builder will appear who will make a significant and independent Ukrainian State (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2011: 96-97; Panchuk, 2009: 264–265; Prokopiv, 2023; Kohl Johann-Georg, 2018: 211).

While traveling through Bukovina and Galicia, the historian shared his impressions of these lands, which at that time had been part of the Austrian Empire for over 60 years, and left fascinating information about the population's life, economic situation, and culture.

He described in detail what the traditional individual housing of the peasants was like, national economic activities, what crops were sown and what crops were harvested; the ingredients of Ukrainian cuisine, their quality; what national clothing the peasants and townspeople wore; family and public life; ancient rituals; folk knowledge, the state of education, interethnic relations and much more. Describing his travels through Bukovina and Galicia, the researcher paid attention to the settlement of the population, the peculiarities of the economy, architecture, and national traditions. He was very impressed by the beauty of the Carpathians, compared the landscape of Bukovina with Switzerland, and noted German influences in the construction and architecture of Chernivtsi and Lviv (Bukovina, Galicia /J.G. Kohl; Petro Bochan's translation from German. 11-34).

Johann Georg Kohl claimed many places in Lviv where it seemed like you were in Magdeburg, Nuremberg, or Frankfurt am Main. He described the churches of the Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Orthodox Armenian faiths and their external monumentality and internal

arrangement. The scholar emphasized that after the annexation of this land, the Austrian authorities left untouched the Polish patriotic inscriptions on the external and internal walls of the cathedrals, which testified to the democratism of the Austrian authorities and their tolerance towards the peoples they ruled. The researcher described Lviv as a culturally rich, attractive, and civilized city with a noticeable Austrian-German influence, as a space of complex national and social coexistence (Brytskyi and Bochan, 2011: 106).

The historian-geographer described in detail the location of Lviv, its size, the surrounding terrain, and the architecture of Lviv, which, in his opinion, was much more beautiful and pleasant than the architecture of many German cities. He noted that the open squares were large, public walks, boulevards and garden plantings were significant, houses, temples, churches, the location of buildings, the branching of streets, the development of the road network were like in the large Polish cities of Vilnius, Krakow, Poznań, all of this had many similarities with the character of German cities that arose in the Middle Ages (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2009: 106; Lehin, 2015).

Johann Georg Kohl was delighted with the Lviv Town Hall. He noted that it was a representative and beautiful building that only a few German magistrates could boast of, and that the Lviv Town Hall was surrounded by a city “ring” built with the best city houses and shops. This spacious market was loudly noisy with a continuous human flow of buyers and sellers, which, compared to the well-known Leipzig and Dresden markets, the Lviv market created a much more interesting picture (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2009: 107; Lehin, 2015).

An observant traveler recalled that the inhabitants of Lviv dressed in French or German, all the inscriptions on the streets, as well as all the signs and advertisements in merchant shops, were in German and Polish, as were the books in bookstores; on the streets of Lviv, only these two languages were constantly heard, so that everything was seen in a double image, as if through binary glasses (Lehin, 2015).

Johann Georg Kohl noted that the region was indebted to the Austrian government not only for the University of Lviv, but also for the gymnasium in every county center, for a relatively large number of schools for girls and boys, where they taught in German, which was widespread in Galicia. Almost every educated Pole spoke it (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2009: 120).

The scholar examined the issue of the colonization policy of the Austrian Empire in Galicia. He noted that in Lviv, a third of the government officials were Germans, at Lviv University, two-thirds of the teachers were Germans, and one-third were Poles. He testified that the Austrian government encouraged the emigration of German colonists, hoping that they would become a model of good management and a strong support for the transformation of Galicia into a market for industrial products and an agrarian and raw material appendage of the metropolis (Brytskyi, Bochan, 2011: 120).

1841 – 1858, Johann Georg Kohl actively traveled in Europe and America. In 1842, he published a description of his travels in Austria-Hungary, Bavaria, England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Schleswig-Holstein, the Netherlands, Dalmatia, and Montenegro, and visited Berlin, Paris, London, and Oxford. In 1854 – 1858 the researcher traveled in North America, as a cartographer-geographer he prepared several valuable maps for the US government, at the request of the US Coast Guard he prepared two reports: “History of the Discovery of the US Coast” and “History and Research of the Gulf Stream” (Bremen, 1868). Materials collected during his travels and observations became the basis of books on geography and local history, in which the historian spoke about the economy, historical past, and appearance of cities, education, and trade of different countries (Kulynich, 1993; 2007; Panchuk, 2009).

In 1863, Johann Georg Kohl was appointed city librarian of Bremen, where in 1870 he found the original manuscript of the work of the Livonian chronicler Johann Renner (1525 – 1583), who in 1556 – 1560 served in the Livonian Order, had access to archives and diplomatic correspondence, and wrote the “History of Livonia” in 9 books, where he covered events from the 12th century to 1582 (Kulynich, 1993; 2007. Panchuk, 2009; Johann-Georg Kohl, 2014).

The works of Johann Georg Kohl have not been translated into either Ukrainian or Russian. In 2003, Petro Bochan translated into Ukrainian the sections of Johann Georg Kohl’s works that relate to the history of Ukraine. The study and understanding of the works of Johann Georg Kohl, his perception of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in the first half of the 19th century, contributes to the development of Ukrainian historical science in the context of European history and is of great cognitive importance (Kohl, *Johann*. Bukovina. Galicia / Petro Bochan’s translation from German).

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