

## PANSLAV FEDERALISM

*The Languedoc Lands in the Latin Alliance and the Ukrainian Lands in the Slav Alliance; Letter to Mr. Xavier Ricardi, July 29, 1878*

. . . . You have asked me for an article on my country for your magazine. May I outline the analogies which exist between our respective motherlands.

I belong to a Slav nation. By ethnographers it is called Ruthenian, Little Russian, or Ukrainian (better Ukraïnian), and is composed of seventeen million people in southern Russia and the eastern part of Austria-Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

Thus our nationality is divided between two empires, Russia and Austria-Hungary, as the Languedoc nationality is divided between France and Spain. There are other resemblances in the literary and political history of these lands.

Therefore, it is not surprising that our Ukraine has produced a literary and political movement similar to that manifested, first in the study of Languedoc texts, then by *Félibrisme*, and finally by *Lauseta* and the Latin Alliance. From the beginning of the 19th century, and particularly since 1840, Ukrainian patriots have been working, not only for local autonomy and the revival of literature in the language of the country, but also for the alliance of all the Slav peoples, since our country is in the middle of the Slav world just as yours is in the middle of the Latin.

It is clear that the union of the Latin peoples can not be achieved without profound changes in the institutions of the Latin States. The past has already given us two examples of the political unity of the Latin peoples, and one of their religious unity; these were the Roman empire, the empire of Napoleon I, and the medieval papacy. All these have been judged and condemned by history, that is by the conscience of the peoples.

There is no possibility of a more or less durable union of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Belgium if these States remain in their present political condition. It is clear that the Latin Alliance can only be achieved through a triumph, in all the Latin countries, of the ideas and tendencies expressed by the word *federalism*. The Latin Confederation will only be possible after a transformation of the institutions, and even of the political and social habits, of all Latin peoples. This transformation must be effected under the influence of the ideas of personal, corporative, communal, provincial, and finally, national autonomy.

These are the bases for the union of the races!

From its foundation your Alliance has accepted these ideas. It is noteworthy that the most ardent champions of the Latin Alliance are precisely the sons

<sup>1</sup> Details are to be found in the pamphlet *La Littérature Oukraïnienne proscrite par le Gouvernement Russe*, Geneva, 1878; and in the article "Il movimento letterario Ruteno, in Russia e Galizia", published in *Rivista Europea*, 1873. [Both by Drahomanov. ed.]

of a branch of the Latin race which does not have a State, an aristocracy, a Church, or even a national bourgeoisie, and is thus forced to demand liberty from the States which dominate it; that is, first cultural autonomy, then administrative and political autonomy.

Similar phenomena are to be found in the Slav world. Recently Panslavism has been much discussed. It is often thought that Panslavism, i.e. the idea of the union of the Slav peoples, is only an invention of the tsarist government, with its Byzantine-Muscovite Orthodoxy, and is only the fruit of its dreams of conquest. This is an error. It is true that tsarist policy has greatly profited from the Slav idea, but we should note that it was not invented by the servants of the tsars, and that it is by no means identical with their despotic State's policy of expansion.

The idea of Panslavism was born among the nationalities which have lost their status as nation states and become the "minors" of the family. It is here that it has found its most devoted apostles as well as its most fervent proselytes. Thus it is more a defensive doctrine; above all it is dedicated to the idea of liberty.

The conception of the alliance of the Slav peoples dates from the 16th and 17th centuries when the southern Slavs (Bulgarians and Serbs) finally lost their liberty and their religious and political autonomy under the Turks and the Greek clergy (Phanariotes).<sup>2</sup>

At that time Turk domination menaced not only the Ukraine and Hungary, but also Poland. At the same time the domination of the German aristocracy and bureaucracy began to weigh heavily upon the western Slavs, such as the Czechs in Bohemia, the Slovenes in Styria, Carinthia, etc., particularly after the Thirty Years War, when the Protestant element was crushed in those Slav States and provinces which accepted the Habsburgs as their kings and dukes.

From that time on the western and southern Slavs, their very existence menaced, began to turn their eyes toward the north and east, first toward Poland, then to Moscow, in order to seek a center of gravity, the center of the Slav political union.

It should be noted that the first theoretician of Muscovite Panslavism in the 17th century, Juraj Križanić, was a Serb by birth. He did not stop at propagandizing the idea that the Slavs might find protection from Moscow, the only completely independent Slav State, but also drew up projects of

<sup>2</sup> The Turks took the coast of the Black Sea, between the Dnieper and the Dniester, from the Ukraine. At the instigation of the Turks, almost every year the Tatars of Crimea made raids into the Ukraine, part of Poland, and southern Muscovy to capture prisoners for galley-slaves, children to fill the ranks of the Janissaries, and girls for the harems. The Turks even sold these Slav prisoners to the French (under Colbert). The Slav countries became a sort of Africa with "white Negroes." This led to armed resistance on the part of the Slavs, particularly through the Cossacks, that is the free settlements of Ukrainians on the banks of the Dnieper and the Dniester, and the mixed settlement of Ukrainians and Muscovites on the banks of the Don.

liberal and democratic reforms for this despotic and *boyar* State. The ideas of this precursor of 19th century Panslavism cost him exile in Siberia.

At the same time that Križanić was writing his projects, the Cossacks of the Ukraine voluntarily united with the Tsarist empire, thus forming the "Empire of all the Russias," i.e. of Great Russia or Muscovy, Little Russia or the Ukraine, and White Russia or Lithuania. Through this union the Muscovite State extended to the Black Sea, and was drawn into the anti-Turk policy. It entered into more direct relations with the Slavs of the south and west, and embraced the nascent ideas of Panslavism.

When the Panslav idea was given definite form in the 19th century, it was once again members of oppressed nationalities who played a major part: Kollár and Šafárik, Slovaks; Palacky and Havlíček, Czechs; Gaj and other Serbo-Illyrians; Hutsa-Venelin and Bodyansky, Ukrainians, were the precursors and masters of Khomiakov, Aksakov, Gilferding and the others known as the Moscow Slavophiles.

This Moscow school has greatly harmed the development of Panslavism for it introduced a spirit of narrow national pride, of Byzantine religious intolerance, and of political servility. This is why Moscow Slavophilism did not receive any sympathy from progressive circles in Russia. Even in Great Russia the most enlightened writers of the last thirty years, called Westerners because of their constant polemics against the religious and political orientalism of the Muscovite school, have constantly combatted the Panslav doctrines as well. Frequently they went further and denied that Slav interests had any value for the Russian people. After 1848 the forerunners of the Socialist movement in Russia, the most advanced of the Westerners such as Bakunin and Herzen, were the only Great Russians who tried to form a party which would be liberal, rationalist, democratic and Slavophile all at once. But most of the Russian public, which was so eager to follow their doctrine of opposition to the dominant system in Russia, remained just as indifferent to their Socialist Panslavism as to that of their "friendly enemies," Aksakov and others.

Recently one of the leaders of the Moscow Panslav school, Gilferding, complained publicly of the glacial indifference to the Panslav idea on the part of Moscow society, and turned toward the Ukraine as the land destined to become the natural center of Panslavism for "All the Russias."

In spite of the feebleness and exhaustion of the Ukraine (this oppressed land englobed in a State of unlimited centralism), Gilferding was right in speaking in this manner, not only for the future, but also for the present.

Because of its geographic position, its ethnographic character, its past and its historic destiny, the Ukraine has more resemblances to and connections with the southern and western Slavs than does Muscovy, i.e. northern and eastern Russia. The Ukrainian territory is connected more or less directly to that of the Poles, the Slovaks, the Serbs and the Bulgarians, not to mention those non-Slav races whose destiny is closely linked to that of the Slavs, i.e. the Rumanians and Magyars or Hungarians.

Before the 18th century, when the Ukraine was more or less independent, it was in close touch with its neighbors. This was strengthened both by some analogous institutions and by a continuous exchange of ideas. Not to speak of the Poles, with whom the Ukrainians were so closely connected, the Czechs counted the Ukrainians as among their Hussite brothers in arms. That is why *Tabor* became the model for the strategic fortifications of the Zaporozhians. The Christian subjects of Turkey (Serbs, Bulgarians, and Greeks) fraternized with the Ukrainian Cossacks in their maritime expeditions against the Turks, who had Christian prisoners of all nationalities as galley slaves on their ships. The Serbs often joined the ranks of the Cossacks or came to study in the schools of Kiev. In the 16th and 17th centuries there was an exchange of *hospodars* (dukes) and Cossack chiefs, priests, teachers, painters and architects even with Latin Rumania. In Moldavia the Ukrainian literary language (Old Church Slavonic adapted to the spoken idiom) was often used as the official language.

After the 18th century, even though the Ukraine was almost completely absorbed by Muscovite centralism and detached from its southern and western neighbors, it still gave the first Slavists to Russia (Hutsa-Venelin, Bod-yansky, Sreznevsky, Hryhorovych, etc.). The idea of Ukrainian national regeneration had hardly begun when it was joined to that of a Slav alliance. But there is a deep chasm between this and Muscovite Slavism.

In 1846 the poet and historian Kostomarov and the national poet Shevchenko formed a society in Kiev called the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, with tendencies toward a democratic and federalist Panslavism. Shevchenko wrote a poem on Hus, whom he celebrated as a "holy heretic." From this time on, every step toward the regeneration of the Ukraine has also been a step toward the propagation of Panslavism. The many obstacles placed in its path by the Russian government, which wishes to prevent any internal progress and all external relations, have slowed down the development of Ukrainianism and of federalist Panslavism, but they have not been able to stop these ideas.

Slavic sympathies in the Ukraine were clearly shown during the last Serbian revolution. As soon as the peasants in Herzegovina started their insurrection in July, 1875, money was sent to them from Kiev and Odessa. Ukrainian volunteers, one may even say conscious Ukrainian patriots, were the first to arrive in Herzegovina, well ahead of Chernayev and the other emissaries of the Slav committees in Moscow, who, a year later, did all they could to disfigure the popular anti-Turk movements in Serbia and in Russia by giving them their stamp and their specific spirit. The anti-Turk movement in the Ukraine<sup>3</sup> is easily comprehensible in the light of the popular

<sup>3</sup> We have already mentioned the struggle, first defensive, then offensive, of the Ukrainians against the Turks in the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1624 the Cossacks of the famous republic of the Zaporozhian knights (on the islands of the Dnieper) succeeded in sailing their little boats even into the Bosphorus, a thing of which the present Russian generals

traditions of the Cossack wars. But the imbecility of the Russian government, which banned Ukrainian literature in 1876, and the ignorance and bad faith of the centralist press, caused this enthusiasm to be lost.

In any case, it was the soldiers from the southern provinces who first crossed the Danube and the Balkans, and who paid for the mistakes of the imperial generals with their blood. Correspondents from all the Russian newspapers have admitted that the Ukrainians could understand the Serbs and the Bulgarians more easily than could the Great Russians. There is no doubt that this contact of the Ukrainians with their southern Slav brothers will have an influence on them, and contribute much to their fraternization.

The southern Slav press, particularly the Serbian, has frequently acknowledged the devotion of the Ukrainians to the cause of the independence of the Slavs, not only from the Turkish yoke, but also from Muscovite tutelage. It has also expressed its gratitude to the Ukrainians for their idea of Panslavism, a true idea of brotherhood, that is of federalism.

In spite of all assertions to the contrary, it is the federalist idea which has come triumphant from the last Russian-Turkish war. Even the semi-official papers of Moscow and St. Petersburg, which are of necessity servile and mercenary, have understood that the centralist panslavism of the tsars and Muscovite Slavophiles has lost all its popularity, not only among the Serbs (who are already independent), but also among the Bulgarians. This was inevitable, thanks both to the political faults and bad faith of the Russian government, which neither wished nor was able to liberate the Serbs and the Bulgarians, and to the total lack of tact of the agencies through whom the Slav Committees in Moscow worked in Serbia in 1876. The agents who accompanied the army in Bulgaria (such as Prince Cherkasky, that bureaucrat with the despotic air) had the same effect on the Bulgarians. In addition, this Turkish War has exposed all the faults of Russian imperial despotism and bureaucratic centralization, so that the ideas of freedom and federation have every chance of success in Russia. Moreover, this war has placed even the most remote representatives of the Muscovite people in contact with the southern Slavs, and has shown them the importance of Slav interests for themselves. We hope that it will now be impossible to deny these interests, as did the Muscovite Westerners on the very eve of the war, even for those who rarely leave their newspaper offices, or for the bureaucrats in the centers of northern Russia—St. Petersburg and Moscow.

cannot boast. This struggle has left deep memories among the Ukrainian peasant population, celebrated in many poems and songs, some of which have been made available to the French public by Professor A. Rambaud in his *La Russie Epique*. Immediately after the beginning of the insurrection in Herzegovina, the Ukrainian democrats published a popular pamphlet on *The Cossacks and the Turks* (about Turkish slavery and the free Cossacks); a few months later wandering minstrels sang to the curious populace old songs about the Tatar and Turk invasions and the Cossack expeditions. [This pamphlet was by Drahomanov himself. ed.]

For the Ukrainians—patriots, democrats, and autonomists, Slavophiles and Westerners by nature and necessity—this state of affairs opens up a vast field of activity, both in Russia and beyond its frontiers.

Being the most closely allied with the Muscovites (the most numerous Slav race and the one dominant in Russia) the Ukrainians should be the natural intermediaries between Russia and the southern and western Slavs. At the same time, being the people which has suffered the most from political and national centralism, and finally, being the most numerous of the provincial nationalities in the Russian empire, the Ukrainians should always act in the interest of liberal institutions and of the ideas of local and national autonomy. It is to be hoped that this situation will be used to spread the ideas of autonomy and federal alliance, at least among the Slavs. Only this idea can succeed in the work where the despotic empire of the Tsars failed, with equal dishonor, both under Plevna and at the Congress of Berlin. It is natural that the provincial or minor nationalities, who have the most to gain from the federalist idea at home, should also press for it in questions of foreign policy.

It is in this way that the provincial nationalities may render the greatest service to those great works which the dominant nationalities have not had the force to accomplish. Here I have spoken only of the people of the Languedoc and the Ukraine, but there are other analogies in the Latin, Slav, Germanic, and Celtic world.

Thus these minors, these peoples of Languedoc, these Bretons, Welsh, Irish, Flemish, these different groups of Slavs, and let us even add the Rumanians and Greeks, who have not achieved complete independence and whose little States are menaced by their greedy neighbors, and perhaps the Danes and the Dutch may also be mentioned, these peoples must become aware of their historic role alongside of the peoples who have created great centralized States in which the principal nationality is always somewhat privileged at the expense of the others. Their role is the propagation and support, in all possible ways, of the ideas of federalism, democracy, and free thought, which have so often been neglected in the large centralized States.

In conclusion let me say that the minor or provincial nationalities must increase their force by the constant interchange of aspirations, by a moral alliance, and by constant mutual assistance. . . .