

# Educational Outreach of A.A. Khovansky's Collected Works "The Slavic Bulletin" (Slavyansky Vestnik)

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**Abstract**—The article highlights the role of A.A. Khovansky, the Language arts teacher from the city of Voronezh, who, in the second half of the 19th century, continued the traditions of Czech and Slovak scholars to promote the Slavic languages and literatures. Over 30 articles on the history, the ethnography, the comparative linguistics, as well as the reviews of the Slavic literatures, were published in "The Slavic Bulletin." Thanks to this publication the Russian reader discovered a great number of unknown pages of the historical and cultural heritage of the Slavic peoples.

**Keywords**—*idea of Slavic reciprocity; Russian-Slavic ties; "The Slavic Bulletin" collected works; A.A. Khovansky; education*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Russia as a state power and a political force on a European scale was perceived differently by the Slavic world. Nevertheless it kept the appeal for the Slavs combining such qualities as strength and kindness, assistance and protection.

However, the interest in the Slavs in Russia did not appear immediately. Firstly, it was related with adoption of the Charter in 1835 and with opening of the departments of the Slavic languages at Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Kazan and Kharkiv Universities, and also with the idea of the Slavic reciprocity expressed in theory by Jan Kollar, the Slovak poet and activist, in a treatise "On literary reciprocity between the Slavic tribes and the dialects" (in 1836 - in Czech, in 1837 - in German, in 1840 - in Russian). [1]

"The Slavic Bulletin" of A.A. Khovansky, the Language arts teacher from Voronezh, appeared to be the bright page in development of the Russian-Slavic ties and promotion of a rich historical and cultural heritage of the Slavic peoples. [2]

## II. IMPORTANCE OF THE IDEA OF THE SLAVIC RECIPROCITY EXPRESSED BY J. KOLLAR FOR LEARNING THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE SLAVS

J. Kollar devoted all his life to surveying the commonality of the Slavs which led to subsequent philosophical reflections on his conception of the Slavic reciprocity\*, which became a strong incentive for

development of the national languages and cultures, as well as the basis for broad exchange of the cultural values, mutual understanding and rapprochement of the Slavic peoples. (\*notion "the Slavic Reciprocity" includes linguistics, historical, cultural and ideological ties).

It must be said that already in the year of 1823 in the preface to the first volume of his collected works "The Songs of the noble Slovak people in Hungary" issued jointly with P.J. Safarik, the Czech scholar, J. Kollar gave his well-known definition of a nation as a community of people united by a language, similar mores and traditions. [3] The Slovak scholar transferred this definition to "the people of the Slavs or the Slavic people," pointed out their spiritual traits and predicted a bright future for them.

The substantiation of the idea of the Slavic reciprocity on the basis of ethnogenesis, cultural history, people's art can be found in the treatises of Pavel Jozef Safarik, the Czech scholar. In 1826 in his work "The History of the Slavic language and literature by all vernaculars," [4] he substantiated his position about the ethnic affiliation and cultural commonality of the Slavs. P.J. Safarik focused on philological and historical-and-cultural characteristics of the Slavic tribes while raising the point about the Slavs being the single people with the single language. Later, in 1837, in his research "The Slavonic Antiquities," the author noted the contribution of the Slavic people to the European civilization based on the study of archaeology, ethnography, history and linguistics. [5]

Thanks to the scholars J. Kollar and P.J. Safarik the idea of the Slavic reciprocity took on the character of an integral conception of ethnic affiliation, spiritual singleness and mutual enrichment in terms of culture. In the works of these brilliant scholars the principles of inter-Slavic cultural interconnection were laid.

## III. REASONS FOR APPEARANCE OF A.A. KHOVANSKY'S COLLECTED WORKS "THE SLAVIC BULLETIN." — STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTED WORKS

In 1863 an article of P.A. Giltebrandt was published in I.S. Aksakov's the Den ("Day") newspaper. The author of the publication regretfully noted that the contemporary reader was very well-accustomed to the Western culture: we have the text books for many European literatures composed;

we are “more interested in the geography of Africa, than the geography of Serbia or Bulgaria.”.[6]

However, the author of the article stated that the Russian reader knew next to nothing about the related languages and literatures, and because of that the history, the customs and the culture of the Slavic peoples should be learned in parallel with the Western ones.

The article mentioned the name of Aleksey Andreevich Khovansky (1814-1899), the Language arts teacher at Mikhailovsky military school in the city of Voronezh who using his teacher's pittance was the first one in Russia to publish a magazine under a title “The Philological notes” (Filologicheskie Zapiski). The purpose of this publication was to introduce the teachers of the home language and the language arts to the scientific researches in linguistics and comparative language studies, mythology, theory and history of literature, etc. The authors of the articles in “The Philological notes” were the famous philologists: F.I. Buslaev, A.A. Potebnya, P.A. Lavrovsky, A.N. Afanasyev, A.A. Kotlyarevsky and others.

Editor and publisher of “Zapiski” magazine Aleksey Andreevich Khovansky understood very well that you can feel the beauty of a language only in connection with linguistics, classical antiquities, ethnography, comparative mythology, a people's psychology and other areas of knowledge; learning of a home language requires from a learner “a comparative method in the area of a whole tribe.”.[7]

In 1866 he started to publish a supplement to “The Philological notes” under a title “The Slavic Bulletin” (Slavyanskyvestnik). Explaining the reasons behind undertaking this publication, A.A. Khovansky wrote that the Slavic people of the West and the South were almost unknown to the Russian community, besides the knowledge of them was quite fragmentary, that was why the Russian reader must be familiarized more comprehensively with the Slavic world.

The second reason was viewing the value of the Russian language as that of a Pan-Slavic language. A.A. Khovansky agreed with the opinion of V.I. Lamansky, the Slavicist, who claimed that the Russian could be a common literary language for the Austrian Slavs. “...to arrive at a positive decision in favour of the Russian language, the acquaintance of the Great Russian people with the Western and the Southern Slavs is necessary, it feels like it is missing in our society and is needed nowadays,” stated the editor A.A. Khovansky. In “The Slavic Bulletin” two Slavic sections will be opened – “a section concerning the language studies and a section concerning history and literature studies.” [8]

In the preface to the first volume “Editor's note” A.A. Khovansky underlined that the one who cherishes the Russian language, the old customs and the national ethos, feels the need for studying not only “the Slavic vernaculars” but also the newest works of the Slavic scholars. While addressing the readers, he reminded them of Jan Kollar's words saying that the idea of moral and literary reciprocity which is present in the Slavic people will not die out,

because they have the desire for literary communication. A.A. Khovansky agreed with the well-established opinion of those scholars who thought that “the vital forces of the Slavic spirit” were hidden in mundanity, the people's poetic word.” [9]

Thus, he defined the main thematic areas for his collected works: comparative studies of the Slavic languages, history, literary reviews, folklore, the people's customs and also a news section.

The collected works consisted of three volumes which were issued during the period from 1866 to 1885. Over these years more than 30 scientific articles had been published including the materials devoted to folklore, the people's antiquity, ethnography, comparative language studies, phonetics, literary reviews, news, essays on the eminent persons, the Slavic world news, translations.

In the whole, the contents clearly reflected the main tasks which had been outlined by the author in the preface i.e. to give the scientific presentation about the languages, the literature, the ethnography and the history of the Slavic people to the wide range of the Russian readers.

Among the authors of “The Slavic Bulletin” there was A.A. Kochubinsky (1845-1907) N.I. Kareev (1850-1931), V.V.Makushev (1837-1883), P.A. Lavrovsky (1827-1886) etc.

Despite the fact that each volume didn't have a well-defined structure, let us conventionally designate a few thematic sections. Those were: folklore and mythology: “The Slavic family according to the folk songs” (D.A. Lavrenok)[10], “Folk songs about Kosovo Polje battle” the article written by I.I. Meyer[11], V.V. Makushev “On the origin of the word “Dazhbog.”[12] In “The people's language arts” section the Bulgarian fairy tales and the Serbian legend about Saint Sava were published[13]

In “Language studies” unit, the works “The Slavic vernaculars. Languages and writing” (translation from Czech by N.P. Zaderatsky)[14] “The History of the philological researches about the Codex Suprasliensis of A.D. Bem[15], “The Review of the Czech literature and language” translated from Czech by K.N. Medvedev and I.I. Artemyev[16] etc.

In “Literature” unit, the articles “VukStefanovic Karadzic” written by L. Karavelov, “[17] “History of Czech literature and language in two parts”[18] “The First literary movement at the Rusyns in Galicia from the time of the Austrian domination in this country” by Golovatsky[19] and other articles were published

Besides, there were the reviews and the news: “The Slavic people from the earliest times (according to Krek) From the Slavic journalism; “Diverse developments, the Slavic news” by A.A. Khovansky[20] and other articles were published

IV. CONTINUATION OF THE TRADITION ESTABLISHED BY  
THE CZECH AND THE SLOVAK SCHOLARS IN A.A.  
KHOVANSKY'S "THE SLAVIC BULLETIN"

The publications in "The Slavic Bulletin" came as the continuation of the already existing tradition, which had been formed among the Austrian Slavs (the Czechs, the Slovaks, the Slovenians and others) during the National Revival era. Primarily, it meant preservation and development of the native language and literature, the main core of which was the people's world perception of reality.

In this regard the names of the following Czech and Slovak scholars must be mentioned: Josef Jungmann (1773-1847), for whom the language and the literature were the integral system of values that concentrate on the all-round development of the nation. There was also Frantisek Palacky (1798-1876), who built up a scientific basis for historical consciousness that was part of the patriotic ideology; there was Josef Dobrovsky (1753 - 1829), who laid down the foundations for comparative language studies in his work "The Outline of the universal etymology of the Slavic languages" (Entwurf zu einem allgemeinen Etymologikon der slawischen Sprachen, 1813).[21]

Noteworthy were the works of Pavel Jozef Safarik (1795-1861), who was at the origins of researching the Slavic antiquities. In his work "The History of the Slavic language and literature by all vernaculars" (in German, 1826) he outlined the key points for the development and the reciprocal influence of the Slavic languages. Among the pleiad of scientists let us once again recall the name of Jan Kollar (1793-1852), whose theory of the Slavic reciprocity has become dominant among the Slavic people for years to come ("On literary reciprocity between the Slavic tribes and the dialects," 1836). J. Kollar's Pan-Slavism influenced immensely the Czech, the Slovak and the South Slavic peoples having affirmed the image of Russia as "the Head of the Slavdom;"

The ideas of Ludovit Stur, the Slovak scholar, who, in his work "The Slavdom and the world of tomorrow" [22], noted that, when choosing a common language for the Slavic people, according to the author's opinion, it was only possible to speak of the Russian language. Some years earlier, Andrej Radlinski, the catholic priest (1817-1879), in the year of 1852 in Buda, published his sermons in Russian and added a dictionary, whereby, in the Preface to a work dedicated to L. Stur, he wrote that to establish a common literary language for the Slavic people, the Russian language was to be preferred.

Among the domestic scientists, let us name I.I. Sreznevsky (1812-1880). In his "Introductory lecture in History and Literature of the Slavic dialects course" he underlined that the Russian Slavs were being in contact with other Slavic people and were more in need of knowing their language and customs. Otherwise "the people's intelligence will die out as dies out the intelligence of someone who takes on the habit of learning someone else's thoughts and someone else's phrases without exercising his own thinking ability. The knowledge of the Pan-Slavic national ethos

prevents us from ugly borrowings from foreign languages", [23].

Thus, A.A. Khovansky's "The Slavic Bulletin" appeared to be the direct continuation of the tradition laid by the Slavics scholars. In this work, the author implemented the ideas expressed in the preface to Volume 1: "to provide the exclusive place in our special edition for studying the Slavic literature, antiquity and national ethos." [24].

V. THE SLAVIC FOLKLORE PAGES IN A.A.  
KHOVANSKY'S COLLECTED WORKS

Each page of the publication is permeated with the Pan-Slavic idea as an idea of the collective spiritual freedom of the whole Slavic world. In the author's opinion "the creative forces and the original Slavic spirit have not faded away, and these forces are hidden in the mundanity, the soul, the poetic word of a simple people and in the antiquity." [25].

As already mentioned above, several publications are devoted to the verbal folk arts and mythology. Let us highlight the two of them: "The Slavic family according to folk songs" (D.A. Lavrenok), the purpose of the article was, by means of collecting "the bright and the dark moments of life" scattered throughout the songs, to choose the leitmotif which had come to be the exponent of the Slavic spirit. ." [26].

Analyzing a few of the Little Russian songs which were dramatic in their character, the author came to think that the basic motive was the love for the abandoned home.

The article gives the lyrics of the songs "Stojan Jankovic's captivity", "The Jaksics put their wives to an ordeal" and others, the author arrives at the conclusion that the Serbian life has been favouring the growth of the fraternal affection, and that is why the sworn brotherhood and the sworn sisterhood – the remarkable phenomena among the Slavic people - are characteristic of the Serbian songs.

One of the most important traits of the Slavic people, according to the author, is "the remarkable force of attachment to one's family." He compares the Celtic songs where the careless young people spend their youth in amusement, fearing the married life. Unlike the Celts, in author's opinion, a Slavic man comes out of youth indifferently, because the time of youth until marriage is only the spring time of love, the real love grows deeper only after the marriage. Outside the family circle, a man is met by the Woe the Woeful, it haunts the Slavic man everywhere, if he left this circle on his own accord. The life of a Slav is about family, there breathes the depth of the feeling, this is a sign of positive human aspirations of the Slavic people - such conclusion is drawn by the author. [27]

The example of the preservation of the heroic national spirit is the Serbian songs. I.I. Meyer, the author of the article "Folk songs about Kosovo Polje battle" emphasized the point that the folks used to find consolation in the ancient songs: "The boys with flashing eyes, the young men with clenched fists listened to the songs about the heroes,

who bravely went to their deaths and fought for the motherland and the faith; but the grief started to grow in the heart of each man as soon as the gusli song about “the tragic Kosovo Polje” began, and everyone swore to himself not to have rest until the revenge was taken on the enemies.” [28] The section contains the wordings of the Bulgarian fairy tales: “Two brothers,” “The Eldest wife,” “If the fate...,” “The Son feeding the family.”

## VI. CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, A.A. Khovansky’s “The Slavic Bulletin” appeared to be one of the brightest pages in the history of the native Slavic studies. These collected works, published by a simple Language arts teacher from Voronezh using his teacher’s humble wage, revealed to the fullest the Serbian word “rodoljubie” (generic consciousness) – the synonym for the Latin “patriotism.” What is more precious for a true Slav than loving his kin, his people, his motherland, his dear ones?

Let us remind you that A.A. Khovansky emphasized that “we, the Russians, have to make acquaintance with the Slavic world, and if the Austrian government is refrained from using the Czech language, then the Russian language is intended not only to be widespread among all Slavic people, but also shall revive and enliven the Slavic dialects” . [29]

In conclusion, it should be noted that “The Slavic Bulletin” composed by Aleksey Andreevich Khovansky came to be the publication in which the Russian reader could not only learn about the interesting phenomena arising among the Slavic peoples, but also feel the whole extent of responsibility for all that happens in the Slavic world.

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