NATIONAL EMANCIPATION, NOT THE MAKING OF SLOVAKIA: LUDOVIT STUR'S CONCEPTION OF THE SLOVAK NATION

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Abstract

In 2003, Slovakia entered the second decade of its independent statehood. The dismemberment of the Czechoslovak Federation in 1993 was followed by a bumpy transition to democracy under the government of Vladimir Meciar. The year 2003 is also the 160th anniversary of the Slovak written language. Ludovit Stur's (1815-1856) coinage of Slovak literary language in 1843 set the grounds for the national movement. This interdisciplinary essay concerns the political thought of Stur, the Lutheran vicar and 'father of the Slovak language,' on the historic background of the pre-1848 Slovak national movement. I shall analyze selected texts of Stur focusing on a) the development of his political thought and b) Romantic Pan-Slavism as the grand break in his thought. Stur was far from being spoiled by political success: after the crushed *spring of nations* in 1849, the first generation of the Slovak national movement virtually ceased to exist. Stur's last essay *Das Slawenthum und die Welt der Zukunft* (Slavdom and the World of the Future) features his complete break with the West: only the union of all Slavs with Russia shall grant their freedom. Due to his elaborate argumentation, his essay can be considered a masterpiece of Central European political thought that features two crucial intellectual movements of the 19th century: Romanticism and Pan-Slavism.

Introduction[1]

In the history of European political thought, Ludovit Stur remains an unknown figure who never enjoyed wide scholarly interest like Thomas Garrigue Masaryk,[2] the founder of the Czechoslovak state. An interdisciplinary and critical study assessing Stur's philosophical and political ideas in English is still missing. Sutherland's brief biographical study gives a good account of Stur's achievements for the Slovak language.[3] Collections of Stur's texts edited by Ambrus and a biography authored by Ruttkay were published in Slovak, another Ruttkay study on Stur was translated in English, and Forst published a study on Stur's journalistic activities in Czech.[4] After the 1989 regime

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[2] See Roman Szporluk, *The Political Thought of Thomas G. Masaryk* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), Stanley B. Winters, Robert B. Pynent and Harry Hanak (eds.), *T. G. Masaryk (1850–1937)* (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1989, 1990), Josef Brozek and Josef Hoskovec (eds.), *T. G. Masaryk on Psychology* (Praha: Karlova Univerzita, 1995), Josef Novak (ed.) *On Masaryk. Texts in English and German* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1988), Zwi Batscha, *Eine Philosophie der Demokratie. Thomas G. Masaryks Begruendung einer neuzeitlichen Demokratie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1994).

[3] Anthony X. Sutherland, "Ludovit Stur and Slovak Cultural nationalism," *Slovakia*, 25 (48), pp. 134-147.

[4] Jozef Ambrus' edited volumes were Ludovit Stur, *Dielo v piatich zväzkoch* (Bratislava: Slovenske vydavatelstvo krasnej literatury, 1954-56), and *Dielo II* (Bratislava: Tatran, 1986). Frano Ruttkay's studies were *Ludovit Stur ako publicista a tvorca Slovenskej politickej zurnalistiky* (Martin: Matica Slovenska, 1982) and *Ludovit Stur 1815-1856*, trans. by Svetozar Simko (Bratislava: Obzor, 1971). Vladimir Forst, *Ludovit Stur* (Praha: Melantrich, 1986). An interesting study on

change, interest in Stur's thinking was no longer limited by ideological constraints. In 1993 Bzoch delivered the first complete Slovak translation of *Das Slawentum und die Welt der Zukunft* (Slavdom and the World of the Future).[5] The Slovak Ministry of Culture declared his 150th anniversary in 1995 as the official year of Ludovit Stur. The Modra international conference of January 1996 presented new research on his life and work.[6] Photographs of Stur and excerpts of his texts can be viewed on a special website.[7] Finally, two excellent recent studies deal with Stur. Kovac delivered a critical assessment of Stur's political views of the relations between Czechs and Slovaks, while Pichler regarded Stur's thought as determined by a "romantic-realistic conception of the nation."[8]

Stur's modest historical account is the result of ideological constraints. In the first Czechoslovak Republic of 1918-1938, Masaryk's state building theory of Czechoslovakism promoted the Czechoslovak polity under Czech leadership. Stur did not fit well into the political canon of prominent Slovak leaders because he opposed political union with the Czechs. After 1948, the Communist Party integrated the Czechoslovak state theory with the socialist state ideology. To abolish ideological references to the Tiso regime, the Communist Party considered any expression of Slovak individuality as bourgeois nationalism and separatist revisionism. From a Czech viewpoint, the puppet state at Hitler's mercy representing the first Slovak Republic from 1938 until 1945 had been responsible for the 1938 abolition of Czechoslovak democracy.[9] The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic's federalization was the only reform of the Prague Spring that survived the Normalization policy adopted after 1968. In the early 1990s, the *Slovenska Narodna Strana* (Slovak National Party) and the majority cultural organization *Matica Slovenska* gave in to a wave of nationalism with anti-Czech and anti-Hungarian tendencies.[10] As one of the creators of the Slovak literary language, Stur was the perfect historical figure to promote, for his activities had been directed both against Magyarization (the Magyar language assimilation), and the

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Stalinism in Slovakia deals with Stur's critical assessment of capitalism. In his materialist interpretation, the author presents Stur as an enlightened and modern figure of progressive Slovak socialism, an intellectual feast, since for the Lutheran vicar nothing was more refutable than to view the world with an atheistic and materialist lens. See Stefan Heretik, *Ekonomicke nazory Ludovita Stura* (Bratislava: Sturovska konferencia, 1955).

[5] Ludovit Stur, *Slovanstvo a Svet Buducnosti*, transl. by Adam Bzoch (Bratislava: Slovensky Institut Mezinarodnich Studii, 1993). Due to Stur's critical views of socialism and communism, a complete translation was not undertaken during the socialist period. The first edition of Stur's German original was published in 1931 by Jozef Jirasek, who provided the German text with critical remarks in Czech. See Jozef Jirasek (ed.), *Das Slawenthum und die Welt der Zukunft* (Bratislava: Safarikova spolocnost, 1931).

[6] Imrich Sedlak (ed.), *Ludovit Stur v suradniciach minulosti a sucasnosti* (Martin: Matica Slovenska, 1997).

[7] The site is http://stur.host.sk.

[8] Dusan Kovac, *Slovaci, Cesi, Dejiny* (Bratislava: Academic Electronic Press, 1997), and Tibor Pichler, "Sturovska romanticko-realisticka koncepcia nacionalizmu" in *Narodovci a Obcania: O slovenskom politickom mysleni v 19. Storoci* (Bratislava: Slovenska Akademie Ved SAV, 1998), pp. 33-74.

[9] The former Czech president Vaclav Havel described the relationship of Czechs and Slovaks thus: "Many of us, Czechs, were a little bit scared since for entire generations they were brought up with the subconscious feeling that the clear expression of Slovak national individuality conceals something suspicious and dangerous." See Vaclav Havel, "Jsme duverohodnou demokracii," *Mlada Fronta dnes* (2 January 2003), p. 7.

[10] Jan Kacala discussed the language issue between Slovaks and Hungarians, in his *Slovencina - vec politicka?* (Martin: Matica Slovenska, 1994). Kacala considered the claim of the Hungarian minority in Southern Slovakia to use its language in areas where they form the majority as "linguistic discrimination" [jazykova diskriminacia] against and "nationalist assimilation" [narodnostna asimilacia] of the Slovak population (p.183ff).

intellectual movement of Czechoslovakism. Let me now present the contents of this paper.

The first section offers a brief introduction to the political situation in Northern Hungary,[11] the territory of today's Slovakia. Prior to the 1848 revolution, the early Slovak national movement focused on language rights. The fight against "illegal Magyarization," as Daniel Rapant called the attempts to assimilate Hungary's non-Magyar population, led to the creation of the written Slovak language in 1843 and, more important, support for Vienna against Kossuth in 1848.[12] The historical conditions present in Transleithania in the early 19th century did not allow the Slovak national movement to achieve its goal of retaining the use of the Slovak language in school and church service. Stur's texts that I have chosen date from the 1843-1856 period and mainly discuss language rights.

The second section deals with Stur's concept of nation and his break with Slovak nationalism. After the 1848 revolution was crushed, political resignation led him to promote a Pan-Slavic theory, which he saw as the last hope for freedom. Before 1848, Stur's philosophical roots reflected Herder's romantic nationalism, but the influence of Hegel's philosophy of history was also crucial.[13] However, the 'Hegelian traces' apparent in Stur's thought emphasize the Hegelian principle of *Geist* (spirit) more than the *Geist's* goal. Stur did not promote Slovak independent statehood, and did not use Hegel's dialectical method.[14]

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[11] Slovak settlement in the kingdom of Hungary was based in the following counties (*comitatus, zupy*) adjacent to Galicia in the North and East and Moravia and Lower Austria in the West. The counties are refered to in Hungarian and Slovak: Abauj-Torna – Abov-Turna; Arva – Orava; Bars – Tekov; Goemoer – Gemer; Hont – Hontianska; Lipto – Liptov; Nograd – Novohrad; Nyitra – Nitra; Poszony – Presporska (Bratislavska); Saros – Saris; Szepes – Spis; Turoc – Turcianska; Trencsen – Trencianska; Ung – Uzska; Zemplen – Zemplin; Zolyom – Zvolen, Laszlo Szarka, " The Slovak National Question and Hungarian Nationality Policy before 1918," *The Hungarian Quarterly*, 35 (136), pp. 98-114. See also "Nationalitaetenkarte der oesterreichisch - ungarischen Monarchie nach den Sprachen-, bzw. Konfessionserhebungen vom Jahre 1910," map in the appendix of Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, Vol. III, Die Voelker des Reiches (Wien: Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1980).

[12] Daniel Rapant, *Ilegalna Madarizacia 1790-1840* (Turciansky Sv. Martin: Matica Slovenska, 1947).

[13] Cizevskij is still the most informative source on Stur's reception of Hegel's philosophy, see Dmitrij Cizevskij, "Hegel bei den Slowaken," in Cizevskij (ed.), *Hegel bei den Slawen* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1961 (2))*,* pp. 397-411.

[14] Cizevskij attributes to Stur a sort of "free variation" of Hegelian topics considering Stur's and his followers' reluctance to "mechanically apply alleged Hegelian systemic thoughts" such as the triade of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis (p. 405f). According to Cizevskij, Stur and his followers, in particular his students of the Czecho-Slavonic society, were Hegelians in that they freely applied Hegel's philosophy to the Slovak political conditions (ibid.). Gogolak, by contrast, speaks of "the educational gap of those small national groups, which focussed on Hegel's idea of the national spirit while neglecting Hegel's notion of the state and, as a result, failed to occupy themselves with constitutional issues," Ludwig von Gogolak, "Die historische Entwicklung des slovakischen Nationalbewusstseins," in *Die Slovakei als mitteleuropäisches Problem in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Muenchen: Oldenbourg, 1965), pp. 27-116; p. 59. I share Cizevskij's point of the free interpretation of Hegelian philosophy by Stur and his students as well as Gogolak's view of the somewhat superficial Hegelianism of the Stur generation. My point is that any final judgement on a philosophical accurate reception of Hegel depends on one's own point of view. I think an interdisciplinary approach can provide a further explanations on Stur's 'Hegelianism without the Hegelian triade': the philosophical superficialty was caused by the socio-historical conditions of Stur's time, in which the intellectual and political ideas of the national renaissance merged with Western ideas of freedom directed against the post-Napoleonic conservative reaction after 1815. In their aim to create a distinct Slavic consciousness and identity, Stur and his followers focussed on the practical implications of Western philosophers such as Herder and Hegel. Slavic identity and Hegelian ideas of a distinct 'national spirit' merged and completed each other.

The third section presents an analysis of Stur's final essay. After 1848, his intellectual shift from Slovak nationalism to Pan-Slavism led him to support the state in the Hegelian sense as embodiment of freedom and justice. But the state he called for was not the Slovak but a Slavic state ruled by Russia. Stur's pre-1848 political thought included realistic suggestions of a peaceful co-existence of Slovaks and Hungarians, which he thought was based on the explicit recognition of the Slovak language. He was less concerned with institutional design for even the most basic needs of language autonomy were threatened by assimilation policies. With the adoption of the 1849 constitution, the Austrian Slavs' hopes for political self-determination were crushed, and Stur saw union with Russia as the only option left. Thus, the leader of the early Slovak national movement ended up supporting Romantic Pan-Slavism, whose main arguments will be presented in my analysis of *Slavdom and the World of the Future*. Note that this article does not deal with the theories of Pan-Slavism.[15]

A summary of key concepts and an analysis of the fascinating philosophical paradoxes of Stur's thought conclude this paper.

Slovaks and Magyars in Northern Hungary

"Since the expression 'nation' for the modern state
means much more than the knowledge of this or

that language, I hereby proclaim that never, but never shall I recognize in the framework of the Holy Hungarian Crown another nation or nationality than the Magyar one. I know there are races and peoples here who speak other languages. The nation, however, here is only one."[16]

Lajos Kossuth's words illustrate the political situation of Northern Hungary in 1848. In the preceding years, the Slovaks' basic cultural claims had taken center stage due to the initiative of a Lutheran vicar named Ludovit Stur, born on 28 October 1815 in Zay Uhrovec in today's Northern Middle Slovakia. His father Samuel was the teacher of young Frantisek Palacky, later to become a crucial figure in Czech politics.

Also in 1815, the European empires under the leadership of Prince Metternich re-established the continental order threatened by the Napoleonic wars. Based on the balance of power principle, the empires' territorial sovereignty was considered crucial for continental stability. To obtain internal stability, the empires, influenced by the Enlightenment, required a functioning administration. In the previous century, the Habsburg Empire had enacted administrative reforms to govern its poly-ethnic population more effectively. In the spirit of Enlightened Absolutism, Joseph II set up the rule-of-law state, which granted legal equality to all citizens, and educational reforms, which facilitated communication between imperial administrative bodies. While the 1781 Tolerance Edict granted freedom of religion, the 1784 imperial act recognized German as the

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[15] Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), Leon Poliakov, *Moscou, troisième Rome: les intermittences de la mémoire historique* (Paris: Hachette, 1989), Frank L. Fadner, *Seventy Years of Pan-Slavism in Russia: Karazin to Danilevskii, 1800-1870* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1962) and Wilhelm Goerdt, "Teil II Russland und Europa," in *Russische Philosophie. Grundlagen* (Freiburg / Muenchen: Karl Alber, 1995/2), pp. 262-304.

[16] Daniel Rapant, *Slovenske povstanie 1848-1849*, I, Documents I, (Turciansky Sv. Martin, 1950), p. 38, quoted in Joseph A. Mikus, "Slovakia within the kingdom of Hungary (907-1918)," in *Slovakia. A Political and Constitutional History (with Documents)* (Bratislava: Slovak Academic Press, 1995), pp. 11-28, 31.

sole administrative language to the chagrin of the Hungarian nobility, which used Latin and Hungarian to communicate.

The nobility of the Habsburg monarchy had always been poly-ethnic. Not ethnic origin, but loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty was the pillar of the empire. On the eve of the 19th century, the intellectual movements of liberalism and nationalism began to change the medieval society into a constitutional nation state, with language, ethnicity and common culture as new facets of identity. The result was a shift of loyalty from the Habsburgs to the nation, which gave the term "Hungarian" a double historical and linguistic-ethnic meaning.[17] First, the term was applied to every individual nobleman living on Hungarian territory, including the medieval kingdom of Saint Stephen or Transleithania, as it was called after 1867. Every nobleman belonged to the *natio hungarica* regardless of his mother tongue or ethnic descent. Under the influence of the nation state theory developed in the aftermath of the French Revolution, "Hungarian" then referred to every citizen of the Hungarian nation state, regardless of ethnic origins or social standing. The second meaning emerged during the Magyar reform period of 1825-1848, which sought Magyar leadership in Hungary. "Magyar" referred to the members of the Magyar ethnic and cultural community (Magyar ethnic descent), while "Hungarian" designated the nationality of a person living on Hungarian soil. Stur was therefore a Hungarian Slovak, a Slovak ethnic of Hungarian nationality.

Weaker in numbers and influence, the Slovak nobility supported the Magyar nobility against Viennese centralism. The conservative politics of the Metternich era resulted in the reforms of 1825-1848, which in turn culminated in the 1848 revolution. Led by Lajos Kossuth, the reform movement focused on the historic imagination of Saint Stephen's medieval kingdom. Hungarian self-determination was always linked to the feudal concept of the *natio hungarica*, since national, not ethnic homogeneity was considered the only guarantee for the Magyar minority's survival in its own lands.[18] Hungarian national homogeneity was to be achieved through loyalty towards Magyar rule and the use of Hungarian as sole state language. The terms "Hungarian" and "Magyar" began to merge, since the transformation of the kingdom's estates to a modern, bureaucratic state administration required effective communication. The idea to establish Magyar as sole language of communication was also based on the liberal and nationalist beliefs that its exclusive use integrated and unified the lower social classes.[19] Hungarian citizenship entailed absolute loyalty toward the project of the Magyar state, its constitution and laws. Hungarian nationality meant Hungarian citizenship regardless of ethnic origins. Thus the goals of the Magyar reform project were similar to those of Joseph II, in particular the ideas of a centralized administration required for effective government and the rule of law state, which would grant the citizens equality in front of the law. The aim to abolish the privileges of the Hungarian magnates, the aristocratic landowners, was considered as much a prerequisite for effective government as linguistic homogeneity, i.e. Magyar as the language of communication. From the viewpoint of the Magyar liberal concept of nationality and citizenship, national minorities or nationalities were not considered an issue, since the notion of citizenship was not based on ethnic grounds. The reformers wanted political supremacy over Hungary and Vienna's recognition of the Hungarian state. For Hungary's non-

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[17] Laszlo Katus, "Die Magyaren," in Wandruszka et al., *Habsburger Monarchie*, pp. 411-413.

[18] Gogolak, "Die historische Entwicklung," p. 51.

[19] Ludwig von Gogolak, "Ungarns Nationalitätengesetze und das Problem des Magyarischen National- und Zentralstaates," in Wandruszka et.al., *Habsburger Monarchie*, pp.1207–1303.

Magyar population, the reforms represented a serious threat to their language and culture, which they considered the essential features of their nationhood.

In Upper Hungary, two mutually exclusive processes began to overlap in the early 19th century: Hungarian state building and Slovak nation building. Due to the importance of language, the processes were irreconcilable. Hungarian state building, or "the idea of a Magyar Hungary,"[20] required national and cultural homogeneity based on Magyar as language of communication, while Slovak nation building was based on the Slovak language. The synergy of liberalism and nationalism, the basis of the future Hungarian state, resulted in increasing efforts to assimilate the non-Magyars, required to become Hungarians both linguistically and politically. The oppressiveness of Magyarization peaked after the 1867 Austro-Hungarian Compromise (*Ausgleich*), which provided Hungarians with the constitutionally granted dominance in Transleithania. Yet, cultural assimilation took place even before that. The replacement of the Slovak liturgical language with Hungarian in 1840, perceived as negation of Slovak cultural and national identity, ran counter provisions of the imperial constitution which protected the autonomy of confessional institutions.[21]

As Magyar demands for self-determination were legitimized by reference to their historic right to Saint Stephen's lands, Czech liberals also called for the historic right to Saint Venceslav's lands. But Slovaks lacked such a historic territory, and could not claim that their medieval state or former polity had been abolished. In contrast to Hungarian and Czech self-construction, Slovak identity was based on natural law. The absence of a historic polity with sovereignty over a distinct territory profoundly impacted Slovak nation building. First, the Slovaks lacked a strong and independent nobility, which could have represented them in the Hungarian and imperial diets. Second, as the least common denominator, the Slovak language became key to Slovak identity, since confessional lines divided the population into Protestants, mostly Lutherans, and Roman Catholics.[22] Protestant and Roman Catholic intellectuals were the main promoters of Slovak nation building.

The 1840 decision of the Pressburg (Bratislava) diet to establish Hungarian as administrative language was considered a direct assault on Slovak national and cultural existence. Furthermore, declaring Hungarian the official church language abolished the autonomy of Slovak clerical institutions. Together with Michal Miloslav Hodza (1811-1870) and Jozef Miloslav Hurban (1817-1888), Stur worked on the creation of a Slovak literary language, whose norms he standardized in 1843. Since Stur and his companions had chosen the politically neutral Middle Slovak variant, the newly created literary language helped to unify the national movement traditionally divided into Protestants and adherents of the Czechoslovak cultural unity such as Jan Kollar (1793-1861) and Pavel Jozef Safarik (1795-1861) and the Catholic faction with the adherents of Antonin Bernolak (1762–1813) and Juraj Fandly (1750-1811). The Slovak Evangelical intelligentsia as the third and youngest faction aimed at the separation of Slovak nationhood from the Czechoslovakist view; they were adherents of Stur. Stur's coinage was not the first one, as an earlier attempt at the standardization of Slovak grammar and orthography had been undertaken by the Catholic priest Bernolak in 1787.[23] In a clever strategic move Stur and his companions had chosen a politically neutral variant which was acknowledged in 1847, on the eve of the 1848 revolution. The Western

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[20] Petr Toma and Dusan Kovac, *Slovakia. From Samo to Dzurinda* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2001), p. 30.
[21] Gogolak, "Die historische Entwicklung," p. 53.

[22] Kovac, *Slovaci*, p. 32f.
[23] Toma *et al.*, p. 25.

Slovak dialect was culturally and politically too close to the Czechoslovak Bernolak codification, which favored the cultural and political unity of Czechs and Slovaks.[24] Due to the Czech claim for leadership, the union was no option for Stur; as such cooperation denied the movement's goals by replacing one dominance with another. Stur's intention was to create a written language based on the vernacular of the peasants, since for him only the use of written Slovak language was evidence of national existence. The more Magyarization affected churches and schools, the more vehemently Slovaks defended their cultural identity. In June 1842, Kollar and Stur submitted to Chancellor Metternich a request from the Slovak Lutheran Church asking for Magyarization to be reversed by establishing a Slovak language chair at the Pest University and a separate censorship bureau for Slovak books, reopening Slovak schools, and allowing Latin instead of Hungarian to be used in church documents.[25] Yet, Slovak hopes that Vienna would support their claims were misplaced.

Stur's efforts on behalf of the Slovak national cause started soon after he enrolled in 1829 at the Protestant Lyceum in Pressburg, today's Bratislava. Stur emerged quickly as leader among student groups and became a member of the Czecho-Slavic society (*Cesko-Slovanska Spolocnost*), a cultural association founded by Slovak students in 1827.[26] His activities to strengthen Slovak cultural identity did not stop once his studies were finished. Stur remained at the school as a teacher and became society vice-chairman in 1835-1836 as well as chair of the program

of Czecho-Slovak language and literature in 1836-37. In 1838 he enrolled at Halle University. Besides his enthusiasm for the language and culture of the Lusatian Sorbs, he studied Hegel's philosophy for two years. His return to the Pressburg Lyceum marks, according to Cizevskij, "the beginning of the history of Slovak Hegelianism."[27] Stur's continuous activities for the national student groups, considered a revolutionary preparative by the Magyar authorities, eventually led to his leaving the high school in December 1843. The board of the lyceum dismissed him on political grounds. Stur continued to teach secretly. Financially supported by friends, in August 1845 he founded the *Slovenske Narodne Noviny* (Slovak National Newspapers) and its literary supplement *Orol Tatransky* (Eagle of the Tatra Mountains).[28] After being elected in October 1847 as representative of the Zvolen County, Stur took the opportunity to ask for Slovak political representation in Upper Hungary. Under the influence of the liberal and anti-aristocratic atmosphere at the eve of the 1848 revolution, he also asked for ending the rule of the nobility.[29]

The 1848 revolution had a crucial impact on Stur, Hurban, Hodza and their young adherents Jan Francisci-Rimavsky (1822-1905) and Stefan Marko Daxner (1822-1892). First, they considered supporting the Hungarians against Vienna in the hope of extended autonomy rights. They expressed their demands for representation in Hungary's parliament, recognition of Slovak as language of the Slovak nation, equality of nationalities, local self-administration and further political reforms in the declaration of the Slovak nation (*Ziadosti slovenskeho naroda*), adopted in Liptovsky Sv. Mikulas on 11 May. The declaration run

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[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[26] Imrich Sedlak, "Ludovit Stur a slovenske studentske hnutie," in Sedlak (ed.), *Ludovit Stur*, pp. 28-39. The first Czecho-Slavic society was founded in 1823 in Vienna with societies to be followed in Kezmarok (1824), Pressburg (Bratislava), Levoca (1832), Presov (1832/33) and Banska Stiavnica (1835/36) and in Modra (1839).

[27] Cizevskij, "Hegel bei den Slowaken," p. 397.

[28] Augustin Matovcik, "Chronologia zivota a diela Ludovita Stura," in Stur, *Dielo II,* pp. 572–585.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 581.

counter Kossuth's wish for a constitutional Hungarian nation state. In need of support, Stur approached Ban Jelacic to discuss a possible future co-operation of Croats and Slovaks against the Magyars. The Croats' situation was similar to the Slovaks'. The June 1848 Congress of the Slavs in Prague, initiated and presided by Frantisek Palacky, seemed to offer not only an opportunity for future anti-Hungarian co-operation of Croats and Slovaks, but also the promise of a new European order based on the equality of nations.[30] But differences separating the delegations and the pre-timely ending of the congress due to revolutionary turmoil precluded the adoption of a common political program. The only achievement of the Congress was the manifesto, which represented a clear commitment to the ideals of the French Revolution as well as the Austroslavist call for the reconstruction of the monarchy into a federation.[31] The Habsburg monarchy was considered as vital for future Slavic politics, all the more as it was hoped that Vienna's support against Hungarian Liberals would lead to an increasing influence of the Slavs on Vienna, which in turn could pave the road toward extended autonomy rights. Since in May that year the Hungarian government had released warrants of arrests against Stur, Hodza and Hurban, the Slovak representatives, who initially opted for the support of the Hungarian revolutionaries, eventually voted for the Austroslav option. After drafting cooperation agreements

with the Croats and the Ruthenes, and recruiting Slovak voluntary troops, the Slovak National Council was founded in September in Vienna, while Croatian and Slovak troops joined the Imperial army. In March 1849, after the Magyar revolution was crushed, the Slovak representatives approached Emperor Francis Joseph I with a draft of the new autonomous district of Slovakia. Their demand for creating a Slovak district, ruled directly from Vienna and excluding Magyar influence, seemed realistic. Expectations of territorial and political reforms conducive to solving the monarchy's nationality problem were nourished by Palacky's federation draft, which he presented to the Imperial Parliament at Kremsier (Kromeriz).[32] The dissolution of the Imperial Parliament and the neo-absolutist constitution drafted by Minister Stadion put an end to the liberal and national hopes the 'spring of nations' had set forth. The Slovak, Czech and Croatian support for the monarchy showed no results.

Facing Hungarian dominance, restrained by the 'reaction' under Minister Bach, the Slovak national movement virtually ceased to exist. During his last years, Stur lived in the Modra village, where he supported the family of his brother Karol, who had died in January 1851.[33] Under permanent police surveillance, Stur published literary texts and poetry and wrote the essay *Slavdom and the World of the Future*. He died on 12 January 1856 of injuries resulted from a self-inflicted hunting accident. Stur's contribution to the early Slovak national movement was crucial, yet the political conditions during his lifetime were unfavorable for Slovak cultural autonomy. What is the philosophical foundation of his understanding of the nation? Let me answer this question in the following section.

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[30] Josef Macurek, "The Achievements of the Slavonic Congress," in *The Slavonic and East European Review,* 26, 1947/48, pp. 329-340. Some 350 delegates of all Slavic nations, except the Bulgarians, met in Prague from 2 to 12 June. According to Macurek, the meeting was not merely a gathering of the Austrian Slavs to promote Austroslavism, but a consequence of the preceding decades of Slavic renaissance and also an idealist manifestation of Slavic reciprocity. The main issue was Slavic self-defense against pan-German and Hungarian political aspirations in Central Europe, which was believed to be achieved by the creation of a transformed Austrian state.

[31] *Ibid*., p. 330.

[32] Kovac, *Slovaci*, p. 45.

[33] Matovcik, "Chronologia," p. 584.

Stur's Understanding of the Nation

"And what [the partisans of *Gemeinschaft* against *Gesellschaft*] hate above all else are just those damned cosmopolitans, who lack roots of their own and wish to impose their rootlessness on others, and try to make it an universal norm in virtue of some grey general humanity. These rootless people are, not surprisingly, engaged in activities such as trade and thought, which lead them to these bloodless values. But that is not for us, say the romantic nationalists: we are rooted to the soil, peasants or warriors or both, we feel, we do not calculate . . . and we spurn those who do . . . and it is we who represent true humanity, and the others are but a parody of man."[34]

Ernest Gellner's words are a good account of the romantic nationalist thought of Stur's generation, which attempted to create a cultural community from the perspective and by means of a village community. According to Isaiah Berlin, Johann Gottfried Herder's Romanticism had three features: populism, expressionism and pluralism.[35] We can find all these Herderian facets in Stur's thought. First, populism as the importance of belonging to a group or a culture is evident in Stur's texts. He considers the nation as cultural community based on the Slovak language. As an unmistakable sign of its individuality, language is the nation, unlike the state, an artifact, a construct established by men to rule over men. Nation and state are two different things, and

membership in the Slovak cultural community does not require statehood. In this sense, nation is a-political. Second, Berlin considered expressionism in its most general meaning: a form of self-expression of individual or group personality.[36] Self-expression is connected to self-realization of the authentic inner being as an individual or group. As an essential feature of individuality, self-expression cannot be separated from the individual or group that created it. A nation's poetry is its expression, its distinct sign of being an individual nation. A nation's poetry *is* the nation and vice versa. Following Berlin, pluralism implies the belief in the "incommensurability of the values of the different cultures."[37] If values of different cultures cannot and should not be brought to a least common denominator, we must accept a pluralist view of different *Weltanschauung* and human beings. Since values of the different cultures are incompatible, they are not equal in terms of an ethical prescription of equality of nations or cultures. Value incompatibility denies the principle of universality embodied, for example, in the idea of the perfect state or the ideal nation. Above all, pluralism welcomes diversity and variety as natural, as consequences of the natural growth of various cultures. Herder's and Stur's pluralism differs from the political pluralism of a modern and liberal democracy in its emphasis on culture and lack of a distinct political meaning. It is essentially a-political, that is, given the existence of different cultures, belief systems and ethical values, there is no need for unity, for unity would violate the natural variety of the world's cultures.

In Stur's writings, we can find Berlin's features applied to Upper Hungary. Berlin's populism equals Stur's membership of the Slovak cultural community, whose language is the self-expression of its natural being. Stur's

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[34] Ernest Gellner, *Language and Solitude. Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Habsburg Dilemma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 19.

[35] Isaiah Berlin, "Herder and the Enlightenment" in *The Proper Study of Mankind. An Anthology of Essays* (London: Pimlico, 1998), pp. 359-435.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 367.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 368.

pluralism equals the acceptance of the Magyars and the Czechs as distinct cultures with their own value systems. According to Stur, Magyars, Czechs and Slovaks are different, naturally grown cultural communities. If Magyars had recognized Slovak cultural identity as a natural right, Stur's self-expression, populism and pluralism would have remained a-political. But his thought gained political significance following Magyarization. His call for Panslavist union does not contradict his pluralism; it is rather a radicalization of pluralism since it re-enforces the cultural distinction between the West and the Slavs.

Stur considers decadence as a Western trait and, therefore, believes that the West has no right to impose its culture on the Slavs. The fact that it does so is no evidence of the West's political superiority, according to Stur. The Slavs should not accept Western rule as culturally superior just because they were defeated by its armies and enticed by its lifestyle. Pluralism is not fatalism, and Stur's message was simple: if the Slavs' cultural values are incompatible with Western values, why accept and adapt to Western influence? Why did the Czechs culturally adapt to Western lifestyle and thought? The Slavs have a powerful leader in Russia, the embodiment of true Slavic values. The content of Stur's *Slavdom and the World of the Future* demonstrates intellectual creativity more than realistic suggestions of how to establish the Slavic state.

Johann Gottfried Herder's philosophy of humanity and Jan Kollar's idea of Slavic reciprocity are Stur's key intellectual roots. Based on Herder's concept of the nation, Kollar created the idea of *Slovanska Vzajemnost* (Slavic reciprocity), which offered Central European and Balkan Slavs under foreign rule a myth of common descent. Tied by natural kinship, Kollar believed that Slavs form one nation (*narod*) divided into four branches (*vetvy*) reflecting the four main Slavic languages: the Russians, the Poles, the Czecho-

Slovaks and the South-Slav Illyrians.[38] Kollar's intention was to increase the Slavs' awareness of being different from Austrians, Hungarians and Germans by calling for enhanced cultural and literary exchange. Reciprocity, or solidarity, offered a feasible method of identity construction and a first step toward the building of nationhood. Stur's pre-1848 concept of the Slovak nation was based on the traditional reception of Herder and the fresh and invigorating idea of Kollar's: Herder's notion of language as the key to a cultural community's individuality, and Kollar's programmatic idea of cultural exchange based on the common Slavic roots of the languages. As Pichler pointed out, "Stur's romantic-realistic conception of the nation" was based on improving national life by feasible steps such as enhanced education, self-discipline, and the will to overcome traditional passivity and progressive economic activities.[39] Stur's idea of the nation as a reflection of its inner spirit (*Geist*) betrays an understanding heavily influenced by Hegelian philosophy. Except for the early formative influence of Slavic reciprocity, Kollar ceased to be philosophically and politically relevant to Stur, since he favored the Czechoslovak idea and was vehemently opposed to the Slovak literary language.

1. Herder: Nation as Language

Stur's Romanticism was based on Herder's account of the Slavs as being a peaceful, hospitable and industrious nation committed to trade and agriculture, and thus unable to defend itself against violent enslavery by other nations.[40] The

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[38] Johann Kollar, *Ueber literarische Wechselseitigkeit zwischen den verschiedenen Stämmen und Mundarten der slawischen Nation* (Pesth: Karolyi Trattner, 1837), p. 11.

[39] Pichler, *Narodovci*, p. 47.

[40] Johann Gottfried Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, transl. of the German *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der*

fact that serfdom was existent in Russia, and the Empire's foreign policy had not exactly been as peaceful and submissive as Herder had seen the Slavs, Stur gracefully accounted as a minor deviation of the otherwise true and certainly most successful Slavic nation. The second crucial thinker for Stur was Jan Kollar, who regarded Czecho-Slovak as one language. The closeness of Czech and Slovak was enhanced by cultural and religious contacts between the two communities. While the Roman Catholic liturgical language was Latin, the Czech liturgical language of the Bible of Kralice strengthened the ties between Slovak and Czech Protestants.[41] Czechs and Slovaks promoted the idea of Czechoslovakism as the cultural and political unity of Czechs and Slovaks. Kollar and Stur's teacher Jiri Palkovic were both adherents to Czechoslovakism and thus refused to recognize Stur's coinage of literary Slovak. The Czech liturgical language was used to legitimize the Czecho-Slovak unity, and its adherents argued for the superiority of the Czech language. The difficulty for Stur and his friends was the fact that the Slovak vernacular had three dialects, of which the Western variant had been adopted by adherents to Czecho-Slovakism. Slovak intellectual disputes on the language issue made Hungarian assimilation measures a rather easy task. Only in 1847 was Stur's, Hodza's and Hurban's coinage acknowledged by the majority of the Slovak intellectuals.

When speaking of Pan-Slavism, Stur acknowledged Kollar's idea of Slavic reciprocity and the positive influence of mutual exchange and contacts on cultural identity. With respect to the Slovak language, he vehemently rejected the Hungarian view of Pan-Slavism as a political movement: "We are deeply devoted to *literary* Pan-Slavism...but a

political Pan-Slavism, we do not know, as it exists neither in our tribe nor in any other Slavic tribe."[42] He wanted Pan-Slavism and Russophilia to be understood as a Slav literary and emotional disposition. Unlike Herder, who foresaw the Slavs' future global dominance and argued that, because of their peace-loving nature, Slavs were best suited to lead mankind toward humanity, Stur did not promote the idea of Slavic leadership of humanity. Before the 1850s, for Stur, the Slavs' diligent and peaceful nature was not tied to political rule. He saw Pan-Slavism as the Slavs' interest in the cultural development of their brothers. But their kinship did not mean that the Slavs were disinterested in non-Slavic cultures and literatures. Stur stressed that the literary works of English, French and German authors were studied with the same attention as the works of Mickiewicz, Pushkin and Palacky were among the Slovaks.[43] The Hungarian fear of Pan-Slavism further served as justification for assimilation politics: "Even the smallest activity in the support of enlightenment, welfare and the indispensable rights of the Slovak nation provoked the cry of Pan-Slavism."[44] To illustrate the Hungarian bias against Slavic claims for cultural and language rights, Stur referred to the French revolutionary Camille Desmoulins: "Says [Desmoulins]: When I retired from public life to privacy, they cried: suspicious! He is pursuing secret plans! When I reappeared in public: suspicious! He wants to draw attention to himself and undermine freedom. When I was poor: suspicious! He will be bought off against freedom. When I was rich; suspicious! He will buy off others against freedom! And, however he was, this way or the other, to the guillotine with him."[45] For Stur, Pan-Slavism was not a political option in

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Menschheit by T. Churchill (New York: Bergman Publishers, 1980), p. 483.

[41] Kovac, *Slovaci*, p. 38.

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[42] Ludovit Stur, "Jazykovy boj v Uhorsku" (1843), in his *Dielo v piatich*, Vol.II, 1956, p. 114.

[43] *Ibid*., p. 114.

[44] Ludovit Stur, "Panslavizmus a nasa krajina" (1847), in *Dielo II*, p. 158.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 158.

the pre-revolutionary period. But how did liberalism and nationalism affect his thought?

During his short stay in Prague for the Congress of the Slavs, Stur realized the weakness of the Austrian government, which opened the possibility of co-operation among the Slavs. The agreements he drafted with the Croatian leadership convinced him of the general desire for mutual support the Slavs shared. Although Stur considered the Habsburg Monarchy's absolutist political system as gone, "the situation favorable for declaring their common roots and the need for tighter relations as being crucial," he lacked concrete political suggestions of Slavic activities.[46] Besides regular informal meetings with representatives of the single "tribes," he suggested the formation of national groups (*spolky*).[47] These contacts contributed to the deeper knowledge of all Slavs and enhanced mutual co-operation. In particular, Stur believed that Slavic newspapers and political journals should have permanent correspondents in each "tribe" to offer reliable and detailed information. These points could have formed the core of a common Slavic program, but the Congress showed the differences in interests that the delegations pursued. The adoption of Palacky's Austroslavist concept supporting Vienna against the Magyar Liberals seemed the most promising option for the future of the Slavs.

Stur's usage of the concepts 'tribe' (Staemme, gentes, vetva) and 'nation' (Volk, natio, narod) was a reference to both Herder and Kollar, who used the same concepts to emphasize the historic origins of Slavic kinship ('tribe') as well as the emerging need for self-identification in the decades of the 'national awakening'.[48] Let me analyze Stur's

understanding of 'nation' and, related to this, his notion of natural rights.

2. Hegel: Nation as Spirit

"Language is ... the most obvious sign of the existence and individuality of every nation. Like an individual person the nation's inner being appears through its language, its spirit is...embodied in its language."[49] Stur's quote shows the two basic elements of his conception of the nation: spirit and language. As the spirit's indispensable tool, language is an essential part of the inner characteristics of a nation. Stur believed that, since liveliness and vigor of a nation find expression through language, the very existence of a nation depended on its vernacular. Language and nation are mutually dependent and connected. Stur explicitly emphasized the importance of the mother tongue, since even well known foreign languages "cannot express sufficiently the movements of the thought and the conditions of the soul."[50] Stur conceived of language as a mirror of a nation's spiritual capabilities and its state of formation: the more precise concepts were missing, the poorer the expression, the more immature the state of spirit. From the viewpoint of the 21st century, Stur's focus on language as a part of the nation's spirit might seem somewhat ridiculous, yet the historical conditions in 19th century Central Europe left him

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[46]Ludovit Stur, "Pohlad na hybanie sa zapadnych a juznych Slovanov"(1848), in *Dielo II*, pp. 185–186.

[47] *Ibid*., p. 186.

[48] Herder used the German term "Stamm" (tribe) to stress on the prehistoric origins of the emerging Slavic nation(s). For the 'national

awakening' of the Central European Slavs, common descent from one main tribe was a particularly powerful idea due to the kinship with the Russians as the only independent Slavic nation. In today's German, the term 'Stamm' has a similar negative connotation like the English 'tribe' used to describe primitive communities or primary aggregations of people based on common descent under the traditional rule of a chief or headman.

[49] Ludovit Stur, "Ponosy a zaloby Slovanov" (1843), in *Dielo v piatich*, Vol. I, 1954, p.117.

[50] *Ibid*., p. 117.

with few other options. Nationhood could be achieved only by enhancing the nation's spirit via cultural development, which for Stur was the question of belonging to mankind in Herder's term of Humanity. Language represented the crucial 'sign of individuality' (*znakom osobnosti*).[51] Given the lack of historic rights and territory, how did Stur justify the nation's individual subjectivity?

The Herderian idea that a nation's individuality mirrors its belonging to mankind overlaps with Stur's reception of the Hegelian principle of the spirit (*Weltgeist*). According to Hegel, history is progress toward freedom; the spirit of the world, in permanent movement toward freedom, is evident in world history. A nation's spirit is part of the world spirit. Its progressive development toward a higher stage of freedom represents the movement of world history. Therefore, a nation's independent spirit features its historic nature. A subject to history, the nation has the divine right to express its spirit through incremental steps toward freedom. Hegel understood freedom as represented by the state, a "universal idea" embodying universal spiritual life.[52] As a goal of history, the state is the realization of the nation's independent spirit in its absolute freedom. Nations transform into states if they are part of the universal idea of freedom. Stur, by contrast, did not consider the state as a spiritual or political goal. Like Herder, he viewed states as artificial creations not expressing the essence of the nation. The nation was the expression of "*humanity as reason and equity in all conditions and in all occupations of men... not through the will of a sovereign or a persuasive power of tradition, but through natural laws, on which the essence of man reposes.*"[53] In his early texts, Stur never spoke of an

independent Slovakia or of state sovereignty. In 1848, revolutionary enthusiasm enticed him to support the concept of Slovak autonomy within the Habsburg Empire. Such a Slovak district with constitutionally granted self-administration, language and territorial rights, and limited sovereignty could have formed the basis of a future Slovak nation-state.

Stur saw the nation as embodying the spirit, but the project of an independent Slovak nation state he considered too premature an undertaking, given the underdeveloped nature of Slovak life. Hegel determined Stur's goal of enhancing the national spirit and promoting its intellectual and cultural development toward freedom and Enlightenment. Yet, he did not consider freedom in terms of an independent nation state but in terms of guaranteed cultural rights, the basis for institution building and a constitution. Therefore, he regarded self-determination in religion and education as key to a peaceful co-existence with the Hungarians. Cultural autonomy required the right to teach and communicate in Slovak and the right to choose the liturgical language. For Stur, this approach was the most realistic.

He expressed the demand for equal rights for the Slovaks in an astonishingly modern fashion. Explicitly, he respected the existence of the Hungarian nation and, even more so, its leading role:

> "It is necessary that the diet . . . judges Magyar-ization policies as illegal and illegitimate . . . [W]e are pleased with the Hungarian nation's spiritual awakening, since they are close to us as citizens . . . [W]e acknowledge the need that our nation's better educated study the Hungarian language."[54]

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[51] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

[52] G. W. F. Hegel, *Lecture on the Philosophy of World History. Introduction: Reason in History*, transl. by H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 197.

[53] Herder, *Outlines*, p. 453.

[54] Ludovit Stur, "Ponosy," p. 124.

That Hungarians were the leading nation was a matter of fact. The crucial issue was the Slovaks' recognition as a nation. Stur was perfectly aware of the poor economic conditions and education of his fellow Slovaks. Focussing on primary and secondary education in Slovak, he sharply criticized the Magyar language domination:

> "During the diet's last session school representatives drafted a bill according to which the Hungarian language is to be introduced as language of education at all levels but the primary schools; but in regions with mixed Hungarian and Slovak population even primary education and basic reading classes are to be held in Hungarian."[55]

The fact that higher education, and hence the training of future teachers, professionals and academics, was held exclusively in Hungarian did not bother him. On the contrary, he recognized the leading role of the Hungarians: "Not at all do we mind that our Hungarian co-citizens introduced their language to higher schools [we are glad] that our neighboring nation found the way which leads to human culture...and professed itself to the principle of life."[56] When Stur spoke of 'life' or 'principle of life', he expressed the Hegelian spirit and the nation's development toward freedom in an apolitical fashion. 'Life' as the metaphor for language was not only blaming for the Hungarians. It was up to the Slovaks to accept responsibility for their cultural survival and the progress of their national spirit. Stur stressed his fellow countrymen's inflexibility and passivity: "We have to blame ourselves: our inadequacy, our one-sidedness, our laziness, our passivity...Our families want their sons to be

like them…to occupy themselves similarly as they used to."[57] And on self-respect and responsibility he wrote: "if we want to achieve something we have to demand it forcefully and permanently, we have to work for it and we must not fear difficulties and sacrifices."[58]

Assessing economic backwardness and intellectual poverty as main features of Slovak peasant life, he stressed time and again how the nation should improve. Apart from primary education in Slovak, he promoted the training of professionals as needed for diversifying and enriching the Slovak economy: "Our duty is to embrace a variety of professional activities…to choose diversity in education, science and professional training...Today, access to all sciences is very easy means, not far away from here we have the institutions required, a quantity of textbooks dealing with all the different professions."[59]

The improvement of Slovak national identity and its cultural and economic status, however, were suffocated by the neoabsolutist regime established after the Magyar revolution was defeated in 1849. The government of Minister Bach silenced not only Slovak demands. Both the Hungarian Liberals' hopes for national independence and the Slavs' expectations of an increased political weight at the imperial court were crushed. What needed to be done? Let me in the final subsection present Stur's break with Slovak nationalism and his 'philosophical flight' to Pan-Slavism.

Russia: the Future of the Slavs

> "Suffering was nobler than pleasure, failure was preferable to worldly success . . . martyrdom was

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[55] Ludovit Stur, "Kde lezi nase bieda?" (1847), in Stur, *Dielo v piatich*, Vol. I, 1954, p. 318.
[56] *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[57] Ludovit Stur, "Dolezitost volenia rozlicneho stavu pre nas" (1846), in Stur, *Dielo v piatich*, Vol. I, 1954, p. 196.
[58] Stur, "Kde lezi," p. 318.
[59] Stur, "Dolezitost," p. 200.

sacred no matter in what cause . . . Independence, defiance by individuals and groups and nations, pursuit of goals not because they are universal but because they are mine, or those of my people, my culture.“[60]

The fact that the Slavs' political claims were forgotten, once the 1848 revolution was crushed and the counter-revolution had unfolded all its oppressive strength, must have caused the desperate resignation so obvious in Stur's final text. In his view, the failure of 1848 and the subsequent silencing of independent voices showed that history had taken a different direction. Slovak nation building based on peaceful co-existence and modest claims for language recognition had completely failed, and the Slavs' support for the Habsburg monarchy did not bring about the expected rewards. The Pan-Slavist shift in Stur's thought was remarkably sharp, as he focused on the Slavs as one nation and regarded the Slovak question as a minor and neglectable part of the grand Slavic future. The future goal was the political self-liberation of the Central European and Balkan Slavs through union with Russia. Herder's and Hegel's influences constitute Stur's eclecticism so apparent in *Slavdom and the World of the Future*.[61] How did his post-1848 thought differ from his pre-revolutionary views?

Together with Herder, Stur was convinced that divine providence leads history. Together with Hegel he considered the spirit as the moving force of the Slovak, and Slavic, nation. After 1848, the focus on the state as freedom's absolute embodiment was new to Stur's thought. He spoke

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[60] Isaiah Berlin, "The Apotheosis of the Romantic Will. The Revolt against the Myth of an Ideal World" in *The Proper Study*, p. 560.
[61] Stur wrote the original manuscript in German, probably in the early 1850s. The Russian translation *Slavjanstvo i mir buduscago* was published by V.I. Lamjanskij in Moscow for the 1867 Congress of the Slavs.

clearly of the Slavic state that would liberate the Slavs. The difference between Stur's Slavic state and Hegel's constitutional state is discussed in the Conclusion. The Slavic state, the union of all Slavs with Russia, represented a crucial step in a process directed towards the goal of mankind's liberation as the Slavic mission that Herder had foreseen. Slovak nation building, Western ideas and political concepts were no longer Stur's concern, for history proved them wrong. For Slavs, there was only one option left to achieve freedom: to rely on their kin and cease co-operation with non-Slavs. In *Slavdom and the World of the Future,* his political legacy, Stur called for a Panslavist solution, despite the fact that his demand for union with Russia sharply differed from his previous views of Pan-Slavism as cultural and literary movement. In his sketch of a future Slavic state, Stur acknowledged Herder's idea of the Slavs' future moral supremacy, and argued that the Slavs had the historic mission to lead mankind towards humanity. The Slavic "tribes" would liberate themselves from Western decadence and lead mankind toward a new age of freedom, peaceful, diligent and decent. Speaking of the single "tribes" of the Slavic nation, Stur referred to Kollar's *Slavic reciprocity,* but deemed mutual support and cultural exchange, the pillars of reciprocity, as insufficient. History was moving toward a future in which the Slavic, not the Slovak, spirit achieved freedom. His intention to sketch the Slavic future was visible in his tone: desperate anger when describing the history of the Slavs alternated with contemptuous comments on Western decadence and euphoric optimism for the future Slavic state. Unlimited enthusiasm marked his praise of Russia and her institutions.

After a long introduction to the history of the Slavic "tribes" and the Western states of France, Austria, Germany and England, Stur analyzed the political and cultural

differences separating the Slavs from the West.[62] The West was doomed for rising against religion, the only institution with humanist values. The Western churches, the Roman Catholic and Protestant, had lost their Christian beliefs and values by their failure to promote faith and care for the believers. Driven by greed and political power, the Roman Catholic Church had become a secular institution obsessed with material enrichment.[63] Despite its openness to progress and the promotion of sciences, the Reformation was too weak to re-establish the authentic Christian beliefs and customs violated by the Roman Catholic Church, which Stur regarded as illegitimate due to its strive for worldly power. He described Luther as the embodiment of Protestant passivity for his refusal to address the people's demands. The West was not only fighting the churches, but even worse, raised arms against religion itself by disintegrating into various factions.[64] Religious sects and communities, who in Stur's view lacked religious legitimacy, signaled the increasing decay of religion in the West. The result of this decay, according to Stur, was political chaos, since arbitrary decisions of individuals and an overall a-religious attitude were becoming the basis of the state.[65] For Stur, the atheists and the communists were intellectually attracted to each other because both despised authority.[66] Given the importance they assign to the individual, the Western monarchies, which he referred to as "so-called constitutional states," would disintegrate into seemingly modern and progressive republics doomed to end up in socialism or communism.[67] For Stur, the communist neglect of spiritual and intellectual needs denied the nature of man. By focusing on physical needs – from food to egotism -- communism reduced man to his primary, animal-like instincts.[68] Rejecting the theories of Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Proudhon, Fourier or Cabet, Stur wrote that communist regimes led to the most horrible despotism which allowed for the rule of the masses.[69] The end of Western humanity, following the loss of religion, was irreversible: "Revolutions will follow after revolutions with each one leaving the peoples of the West in a worse state than before."[70] Yet, if the West was helpless in its decay, where can humanity find hope and redemption? Herder appears clearly in Stur's answer: "There in the wide East, in the lands of the Slavs, the nation of the future!"[71]

After a thorough presentation of the history of Slavic institutions, Stur investigated three options of liberation -- federalism, Austroslavism, and the union of all Slavs with Russia – and showed his preference for the latter.[72] Why should the Slavs reject the federalist and Austroslavist options?

According to Stur, three main factors work against the federation. First, it was the territorially mixed population of the Empire consisting of Slavs, on the one hand, and non-Slavs such as Germans, Hungarians, and Italians, on the other. Second was the religious diversity of the Slavic 'tribes', which were Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox. And the third factor was Slavic particularism and the general lack of unanimity. The federal solution was unrealistic because "the level of spiritual life differs from tribe to tribe."[73] As much as it was evidence of the richness of the Slavs, cultural and linguistic diversity represented the very obstacle to achieve the desired unanimity, since "it is natural, that eight

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[62] Stur, *Das Slawenthum,* pp. 75-133.
[63] *Ibid*., p. 62.
[64] *Ibid*., p. 63.
[65] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[66] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[67] *Ibid*., p. 76.

[68] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[69] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[70] *Ibid*., pp. 132-133.
[71] *Ibid*., p. 133.
[72] *Ibid*., p. 163.
[73] *Ibid*., p. 163.

tribes and literatures won't easily be joined in unanimity."[74] The federation had to unite the Poles of Posen, Silesia and Galicia, the Czechs of Moravia and Bohemia, the Slovaks of Slovakia, the Sorbs of Lusatia, the Ruthenes of Galicia and Hungary, the Slovenes of Krajina and Dalmatia, the Serbs and the Croats. But particularism and separatism dominated the relationships of Russians and Poles, of Serbs and Croats, and of Slovaks and Czechs.[75] Fourth, the threat posed by non-Slavic nations and the vast geographical distance separating the tribes further explained why a federation was impossible. It was obvious, according to Stur, that Russia refused to support the Slavs of Central Europe and the Balkans by claiming that an independent Slavic state would seek to subject her or fight against her with Western ideas and Western assistance.[76] Stur singled out the Germans, Italians and Magyars as crucial political factors:

> "The federation will fall to pieces since it is nonsense to believe that numerically weak tribes, surrounded and internally fragmented by foreigners, dominated by foreign capitals, robbed of their means, under-developed and disunited, territorially scattered, broken by foreign rule and whose separatism is threatened by foreigners and Russia, were actually capable of building states."[77]

Finally, it was time to face reality: "The task of our tribes is not to build states but to prepare the grand work [of being] courageous, enlightened and enthusiastic enough to fulfill all the demands of redemption for which we have longed so dearly."[78] What exactly did he mean by 'redemption' and

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[74] *Ibid.*, p. 171.
[75] *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 175.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

'grand work'? Providing no further details, Stur moves on to analyzing the Austroslavist option.

Stur refuted Austroslavism as the second option of liberation. Austroslavism, an idea that originated with the Czech nobility, was even more absurd to him than the federation, since it was based on retaining Austrian rule and institutions. The project of making Austria the center for all South and West Slavs in the hope to significantly change their political situation, missed a crucial point: Austria's power was based on the "Germanisation of the Slavs," a policy which had its roots in the Carolingian Empire.[79] According to Stur, Austria always sought to spread German influence towards the East. By establishing German culture, language and aristocratic rule on subjected peoples, Austria wanted to defend Christianity against the Ottoman Empire with a Germanized Central European population.[80] Since the Ottoman threat was defeated, nations refused to be kept on tight leash and asked for independence. Here, Stur revealed his uncritical anti-German attitude and seemed unaware of the political goals of Enlightened Absolutism. The establishment of the constitutional state, which was the primary goal under Maria Theresa and Joseph II, resulted in centralist reforms, which led to the supremacy of the German language required for a more effective government. Equating Austrian dynastic anti-liberalism with Western and German anti-Slavic disposition, Stur emotionally referred to the aftermath of 1848:

> "[H]ow did [Austria] react to the thousands of victims who fell for her? . . . By sending German bureaucrats and Hungarian civil servants to oppress Slavs everywhere . . . on the border, where, according to the news, the widows of the fighters fallen for Austria amount to 24,000 – let

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[79] *Ibid.*, p. 177.
[80] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

alone the orphans who are not spoken of at all –
the government raised the price of salt . . . This is
the usual Austrian gratitude!."[81]

Since Austria lost her legitimacy because of her decadence
and immorality, any attempt to save the empire was futile,
and absurd when coming from the Slavs. In an angry tone,
Stur accused the Czech Austroslavists of treason and lack of
Slavic solidarity. The Czechs' arrogance and superiority
caused political blindness and made them forget the victims
of the White Mountain battle (*Bila hora*).[82] The Slavs' only
option was union with Russia. On which principles should
such a union be based? Stur outlined the factors which, in his
view, made Russia the Slavs' legitimate leader: her
independence, her character, old institutions, Orthodoxy and
language.

Following Stur, Russia was the only Slavic nation
able to defend her independence and save the honor of the
Slavs.[83] Her main power source was the unity of the Czar
and the Russian people. The Russian nobility was willing to
make sacrifices without enjoying political rights, scholars
were diligent and dedicated to her greatness, the army
enthusiastically served the Czar and the idea of a world-
fatherland, and the clergy showed reverence for the country's
religion.[84] The main reason for the union was the character
of the Russian people, whose strength, modesty and kindness
embodied the Slavic nature. In spite of her power, Russia
allowed the foreign people at her borders to live in peace and
did not interfere in their way of life. Stur believed that the
Slavic nations could trust Russia's hegemony because she
will welcome the lost brother tribes in her state and house.[85]
Addressing Russia directly, Stur begged her to accept her
historic mission by building the institutional and moral
conditions for the union: abolition of serfdom, establishment
of self-government for peasant communities, Orthodoxy as
state religion for all Slavs and, finally, Russian as common
literary language.[86]

Serfdom, according to Stur, was a crime against the
spirit of the Slavic nation, and Russia's biggest evil. Its
abolition was a Christian command, and Russia had to put an
end to this evil.[87] According to Stur, only free persons should
own land. Once all people were free, land ownership was to
be regulated according to the traditional *mir*, the Slavic
community, with all young adults having an equal share of
land at their disposal. To prevent poverty, plot division was
banned. The Slavic community cared for members in need,
whereas the West freed the individual without taking care of
him, an oversight which led to poverty and misery. Stur
described the *mir* as the basic local administrative unit. The
right of self-government protected village property.
Community members elected the *starshin* as representative
reporting to the regional authorities, while the community
provided limited self-defense and regulated minor public
affairs.[88] The father was the family's legitimate
representative. This true Slavic representation fulfilled
family and community interests better than its Western
counterpart, which assigned voting rights to everybody.[89]
Stur opposed the Western right to vote since it increased
individualization and fragmentation, features of Western

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[81] *Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.
[82] *Ibid.*, p. 189. The Czech Protestant nobility's defeat in the battle at the
White Mountain near Prague in 1620 marks the end of Hussitism in
Bohemia. While the war of 30 years in Europe should last until 1648,
the Jesuit order called in by the Habsburgs carried out the subsequent
re-Catholisation of Bohemia.
[83] *Ibid.*, p. 204.
[84] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[86] *Ibid.*, pp. 219-235.
[87] *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218.
[88] *Ibid.*, p. 220.
[89] *Ibid.*, p. 220.

decadence. For him, individual interests placed above the common good of the community led to carelessness and neglect of the other. The representation by the *pater familias* covered the smallest unit of society and corresponded to his design of the government and administrative order of the Slavic state: the *mir* represented part of the *zup*, or *okruzje*, *wojewodstvo*, comparable to the English county or duchy. The *zupy* as territorial units composed the state: "For our nation, the *mir* represents the enlarged family, the *zupy* are the enlargement of the *mir* and the state the union of the *zupy*."[90] Stur's administrative and territorial structure allowed each level limited self-government. But he drafted the Slavic state as an absolutist and centralized monarchy, in which *zupy* representatives assisted the emperor.[91] On the competencies of representatives, Stur's made an interesting statement conveying his 1848 anti-aristocratism: in the true Slavic state there was no room for nobility since "our national spirit does not acknowledge privilege by birth."[92] The heads of *zupy* form the senate, representing the people in front of the government. The emperor is in charge of all administrative and political decisions not under the *zupy* jurisdiction. As the state's symbolic embodiment, the Czar holds legislative, executive and judicial powers, which guarantee internal unity and international independence. "This is perfect monarchy, called absolutist in the West….In Russia...democratic institutions are to be adapted according to our national spirit."[93]

Russia's church served as a model, and Stur viewed Orthodoxy as the alpha and omega of the state.[94] Roman Catholicism and Protestantism contributed to Western division between government and people by creating the secular divide of church from state. The Orthodox Church, by contrast, protected the state by joining it.[95] Orthodoxy was neither subject to the state nor a religious kingdom determined to rule spiritually over the entire world. In institutional terms, church was equal to government and its task was to preach the divine message. Thus, Western categories of 'political' and 'a-political', the result of the secular division of church and state, did not apply to Orthodoxy, which embraced the entire spiritual life of the community and could not be separated from the government. In earlier times, the patriarch had to remind the emperor of his duties toward the ruled.[96] Enthusiasm for Czarist Russia led Stur to idealize the Orthodox Church as the authentic expression of Christianity, which lacked the secularized professional clergy and the powerful pope he considered the Catholic Church to be based upon. Since the Catholic Church strived for secular power, in particular through its policy of mission, Stur regarded the Western divide of church and state as mistaken, i.e. not feasible if one took religion seriously. Orthodoxy, according to Stur, never committed religiously motivated crimes such as the "devilish work of the inquisition and the Jesuits." It also abstained from the missionary zeal of global rule so typical for the Roman Catholic Church and its tolerance and generosity "introduced to the Holy Bible and to the churches of all nations the vernacular of the people."[97] A former vicar of Lutheran faith, Stur supported Orthodoxy as the church of the future imploring the "mother of Slavs" to return to the tribes placed under Catholic domination: Czechs, Slovaks, Poles and Croats. Once the hated foreign rule ended, so Stur

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[90] *Ibid*., p. 221.
[91] *Ibid*., p. 222.
[92] *Ibid*., p. 222.
[93] *Ibid*., pp. 222-223.
[94] *Ibid*., p. 226.

[95] *Ibid*., p. 227.
[96] *Ibid*., p. 228.
[97] *Ibid*., p. 230.

believed, the Orthodox Church was welcomed by its true believers.[98]

The Slavic state Stur sketched further needed a common literary language.[99] In Stur's view, the efforts of *Slavic reciprocity,* the mutual interest of the Slavs for their kin's literature and cultures, were useful and praiseworthy, yet they represented but a tiny substitute that could never replace the much-needed common literary language. Given his enthusiasm for historic and ancient Slavic institutions, it is interesting to note that Stur did not support Old Church Slavonic, which "already vanished and is merely dead."[100] He suggested Russian as the hegemonic literary language able to awake the Slavic spirit and unite the "tribes" by virtue of its wide usage.[101] Legitimizing the Russian language by reference to the independence and power of the Russian nation, Stur conceived of the Western and Southern Slavic languages as insufficient to meet the demands of a common written language. His own political resignation was evident when he spoke of the lack of means, the tribes' disunity and the small territories they inhabited: "how far can they, in such conditions, promote the spirit of mankind?"[102] Stur left no doubt that he was aware of the complicated nature of establishing a common literary language. He admitted that, given the situation at the time, one should not expect the "tribes" to unite but prepare the ground by promoting the issue."[103]

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[98] *Ibid*., p. 233.
[99] *Ibid*., p. 234.
[100] *Ibid*., p. 173.
[101] *Ibid*., p. 235.
[102] *Ibid*., p. 234.
[103] *Ibid*., p. 235.

Conclusion

This essay analyzed Stur's political thought and understanding of the Slovak nation. His philosophical beginnings show the influence of Herder's romantic appraisal of the Slavic nations and Kollar's cultural theory of *Slavic reciprocity*. Yet Kollar's view of Czecho-Slovak as one language was incompatible with Herder's, which regarded language as an essential feature of national identity. For Stur, the coinage of the Slovak literary language was the fundamental task of nation building, involving the cultural and political independence of the Slovaks from the Czechs. According to Stur, evidence of the Slovak nation was clearly given in its historic and political development in Upper Hungary. The problem was not Magyar hegemony in Hungary, but their failure to recognize the Slovaks as a nation. The assimilation project of Magyarization was a direct attack on the Slovak national spirit and threatened their natural right of existence.

In his fight for the rights of the Slovak language, Stur did not promote the idea of a Slovak nation state, since he did not consider statehood as a goal. For Slovak national existence, language autonomy, not statehood, was essential. In this respect, Stur differed from Hegel, who saw the state as the indispensable goal of history. Hegel's concept of the spirit as expression of nation recognized the state as the realm of freedom. Only the constitution could guarantee freedom for the populace. Stur shared Hegel's understanding of the independent spirit of the nation as expressing its historicity. Yet Herder's influence was of greater importance: his romantic idea of Slavs as future leaders of humanity provided the goal of freedom with religious optimism. In his pre-revolutionary thought, Stur regarded emancipation from Magyar domination and cultural identity as his main tasks. Sovereign statehood was not desirable since the very nature of Slovak existence was based on

language. The state as artificial construction represented the very opposite of Stur's romantic idea of nationhood. Had the Hungarians not imposed their assimilation policies, Slovaks and Hungarians could have lived in peaceful co-existence, since Stur explicitly welcomed the Hungarians' leading role in the common state. Nation building was embodied in national emancipation and awareness of the nation's spirit. Language autonomy enriched the nation's education and intellect.

After the political disappointment of the 1848 revolution, *Slavdom and the World of the Future* mirrored Stur's bitterness, deception and romantic enthusiasm, and signaled his break with the national idea. Despite the imprecise institutional design and proposals for political transformation, the vehemence and enthusiasm with which he asked for the future Slavic state suggest that Stur eventually acknowledged Hegel's notion of the state as a philosophical truth. But the state as conceived by Hegel differed from Stur's state in terms of the role of individual rights and the body of law. Before moving forward, let me briefly explain Stur's notion of natural law, which is intrinsically connected to the constitutional set-up of his Slavic state. His notion of law is the basis of the two great paradoxes in his thought. While I already touched on the institutions of Stur's future Slavic state, in what follows I will focus on the importance of these traditional institutions for his notion of law and, in a wider sense, his philosophical eclecticism.

The law of nature is of universal importance, since it applies to all peoples considered as equal in front of God. Therefore, nations should not subject other nations. In political terms, the independent nation state as projected in the 19th century by the Western states was considered the logical consequence of natural law. In Upper Hungary, the Slovak insistence on natural law and their language led the Magyars to assume that Slovak national awareness was the

first step toward claims for an independent statehood which meant loss of territory. A Slovak secession threatened the constitutional Hungarian state, the goal of the Magyar reforms initiated by the liberals. Stur's notion of natural law did not support Slovak statehood. According to the principle of equality inherent in natural law, Stur recognized the right of existence for the Czechs, Magyars, Croats, and all nations. This did not involve statehood, power sharing or other form of political participation at the governmental level. For Stur, the problem was not the universal dimension of natural law, since he explicitly accepted Magyar leadership. The problem was the political implications of the understanding of Hungarian nationality. To limit Vienna's centralism, the Magyars put forth concepts of statehood and nationality which denied natural law. Magyar nationalism, in Stur's view, could not reconcile the constitutional state with the recognition of the non-Magyars' natural right of existence. The result was a politicized understanding of the equality principle which, according to Stur's notion of pluralism, transformed natural equality into an artificial equality identical to Hungarian citizenship. While natural law set the basic principle that, by nature, all nations and individuals are equal, the Magyar liberals did the exact contrary: they set Hungarian citizenship as basic principle of equality and understood it in Magyar terms. In Stur's view, in order to be equal in terms of Hungarian citizenship non-Magyars had to become Magyars and give up their language. Due to this negation of natural law and abolition of natural rights, Magyar nationalism was anti-religious, if not atheistic.

In Stur's thought, natural law was the legitimating factor of national existence and the source of justice, because it was given by God. In his romantic manner, he considered man-made artificial legal institutions, constitutions and the role of the judiciary as less relevant for national development. Man should not interfere with the natural order provided by the divine. In his pre-1848 speeches defending

the language rights, Stur asked for the observance of the language rights guaranteed by the constitution, evidence of his conservatism with respect to the legal order. Yet, influenced by the liberalism of 1848, Stur rejected the leading role of the aristocracy. This is the first paradox of his eclecticism: although he endorsed the aristocratic system as the political order in Upper Hungary, he refused to acknowledge the nobility as the leading social class on which the system depended. The fact that the nobility was increasingly supporting Magyarism instead of the poly-ethnic tolerance once existent in the Hungarian kingdom supported Stur's conservatism. His view of the role of the nobility showed populist egalitarianism: all individuals were equal; privilege by birth was to be rejected. But he failed to add to his call for egalitarianism the corresponding legal and political reforms.

History further proved his pre-1848 agenda as wrong: the nation's progressive unfolding did not involve Slovak cultural autonomy. While Stur asked for basic language rights, Magyarization targeted this minimum of identity. If the law or the constitutional reality embodied in the emperor failed to protect the minimal rights of the Slovaks, then, according to Stur's Hegelianism, there was something wrong with the constitution. After 1848, Stur recognized as mistaken the belief that co-operation with non-Slavs can benefit the Slavs. With or without constitutional guarantees, the rights of the Slavs were ignored. Therefore, the opposite of what he believed earlier must be true. After 1848, Stur was convinced that world history moved not toward the unfolding of the Slovak nation within Hungary's political framework but, as Hegel predicted, toward an independent state. The state which could grant freedom could only be the Slavic state.

With Hegel, Stur understood the nation as part of the absolute spirit, gradually unfolding toward freedom in space and time through world history. Freedom determined the movement of the absolute spirit, which was rational and self-conscious. Unlike Hegel, Stur did not deal with the dialectical movement of thesis and anti-thesis which leads to synthesis. Rather he immediately anticipated Slavic freedom as the goal of world history. In his eyes, universal freedom for the Slavs was embodied in the formation of the absolutist Slavic monarchy led and protected by the Russian Czar. His draft of the Slavic-Panslavist state was Stur's second paradox. Unaware of the contradiction he created, he combined the Hegelian idea of constitutional monarchy with traditional Slavic institutions. For Hegel understood monarchy as a form of the perfect, rational absolute spirit, that is, the absolute self-conscious spirit. In that, Hegel considered freedom as the constitutionally granted limitation of the state. The citizens enjoying (limited) freedom from state power represented their will through elected deputies: "For the purposes of legislation in general, the people should be represented by deputies. The so-called representative constitution is the form with which we associate the idea of a free constitution."[104] Individuals subjected themselves to the rule-of-law state without a contract, and thus bypassed the common agreement of a legal character that Rousseau and Hobbes regarded as a basic prerequisite for social order. The state protected the representation of interest groups or corporations and "is subordinated to a power whose nature is necessarily such that the particular spheres can exist independently outside it – in other words a monarchy."[105] Hegel's rationalistic, enlightened and absolutist state was a constitutional monarchy in the form of a modern nation state. The constitution equaled rational universal freedom while sustaining the totality of government, society and individuals. Society and state were based on restricted governmental rule, which cannot arbitrarily interfere with

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[104] Hegel, *Lectures*, p. 121.
[105] *Ibid*., p. 123.

citizens' rights. Individuals were given space free from governmental interference by the rule-of-law state.

Crucial for Hegel's ideal state were the principles which Stur rejected as fundamental causes of Western decadence and fragmentation: separation of church and state, rational accountability of the independent administrative apparatus, and the separation of the governmental and civic spheres limited by the law. In Stur's view, law, rights and legal institutions were responsible for the Western divide between government and populace, the economic misery of the poor, the ensuing political unrest and the increasing anarchy and chaos caused by the masses. The lack of religiosity in the West determined the raise of communism, which Stur rejected as a materialist social order which, at the end of the day, caused the destruction of mankind. Stur understood the state as the embodiment of freedom for the Slavs and the best protection against disunity and fragmentation. This freedom was based on protecting the collective, not the individual. The group, community and society had precedence, for they granted economic and moral survival to the individual. All spheres of society had to contribute to the protection of the organic whole by renouncing the Western particular rights believed to achieve individual freedom. Stur thought that the whole could exist only by the common will of all to renounce the rights separating and alienating individuals from their co-citizens and the populace from the government. Since the institutions of *starshin*, the governor of the *zupy* and the senate grant popular representation and participation, the emperor was not cut off from the populace by laws and institutions. As the sublime form of common will, the emperor embodied judiciary, executive and legislative power *in persona*. In metaphysical terms, the Czar *was* the common will, the perpetual embodiment of the general will and common sense of the populace that prevailed through time. Emperor and citizens were one in eternity. The absence of separation of powers represented, according to Stur, perfect power not limited to political and governmental issues.

The Church, which depended on him due to the absence of a professional clergy, assisted the Czar. Neither Czar nor Church was independent, and unlike in the West they could not be separated into secular and religious power spheres. The Slavic alternative to Western dualism consisted of the monistic system of empire and Church. Both the Czar and Orthodoxy formed an organic whole that cared for the totality of life: the well being of the population in domestic affairs, and the protection of the nation against external threats. The priests understood the citizens' concerns because they shared their life. Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, Orthodoxy had preserved its true spiritual task of promoting religion and did not succumb to the worldly temptation of creating an institution competing for secular power. In Stur's thought, the Vatican was a godless anti-religious creation. Stur's notion of the state was opposite to Hegel's: it sustained the organic union of governmental power and populace with a minimum of legal institutions. In fact, law and popular representation were kept to a minimum, which reflected the natural social order. The Slavs became free by keeping their traditions based on natural law. According to nature or divine order, human existence was metaphysically bound to family, local and national community. It can be said that Stur considered man-made artificial order and law proliferation as unnatural, directed against the divine order of being. Ultimately, Hegel's constitution is a mere blasphemy, a clear evidence of the loss of religiosity.

Stur took the Hegelian ideal of the state and its goal of freedom and justice, labeled it Slavic and filled it with a minimum of institutions, whose limited competencies Hegel would have deeply disapproved of. For Hegel's idealistic aim was to create the state as final wisdom of enlightened humanity, in the sense that the state represented the end of

history: rational spirit in its absolute perfection, justice and freedom embodied in the constitution. Noteworthy is the fact that Stur was unaware of the philosophical contradiction he created with his concept of the Slavic state. He recognized institutions as fundamental for a distinct traditional Slavic democracy which protected the community as a whole, and in which individual rights had to comply with the will of the community. There was no place for disagreement, even in rural peasant areas, since the *starshin* was held accountable for the well being of his community. This micro-level democracy was based on the will and consent of the majority, represented by the *starshin*. Stur conceived of accommodating of disagreement or finding a compromise to integrate the minority's will as petrifying disunity and fragmentation. Dissenters had to subject themselves to the decision of the majority without the possibility of negotiating consent. This system, based on the winner-takes-all principle, allowed for great stability, but less for change and reform. It was essentially conservative. Stur considered such a patriarchal and patronizing structure the best response to Western individual rights. Hegel, by contrast, aimed for fragmentation, since he considered the limitation of powers to be the key to freedom. The constitution embodying the absolute spirit had to protect the individual against the community.

Stur's and Hegel's understanding of the rule-of-law state mirrored the gap between the Western and Panslavist notions of political legitimacy. For Hegel, political legitimacy was individualistic, an issue of legal concern embodied in the state. Stur considered the political system as legitimate only if it sustained a legal minimum providing protection for the whole of nature and life against fragmentation, isolation, misery and decadence.

Stur considered the micro-democratic traditions of the rural social order, such as the *mir*, the *pater familias* embodied in the *starshin* and the community as the owner and distributor of the soil as essential elements of his future Slavic state. The shift in his thought, from language rights to Pan-Slavism, resulted in his notion of justice and law, with justice embodied in the natural social order mirroring the Slavic peasant traditions. Justice was an issue of religion as the fundamental view of life. The right way of solving legal problems was based on Christian Orthodox ethical principles of common sense. An independent judiciary, similar to the Western courts protecting the individual, applied the law. Yet applying law through an independent legal institution was not, in Stur's thought, justice in moral terms. Instead, it only exerted legal principles without considering the long-term metaphysical benefit of the whole community. In his eyes, legitimacy was essentially moral, not legal.

Stur's Slavic state and its fundamental principle of unity were not irrational ideas, although they seem so from a Western viewpoint which regards individual freedom as dependent on legal guarantees and separation of powers. Stur's state was a logically coherent construction based on his eclecticist view of Hegel, Herder and the Slavs. If one gave preference to the group's wellbeing instead of protecting the individual, Stur's design of the Slavic state is almost perfect, with the territorial question being the fantastic-unrealistic issue which renders it unfeasible. Focused on preserving the whole, it was more rational for Stur to think in collectivist terms than to favor the individual. In other words, it was more rational to focus on the group than the individual, since the group meant the survival and wellbeing of all. It was moral to sustain the group instead of sacrificing its wellbeing to individual preferences. The Slavic state embodied above all the principle of unity protecting against the harmful consequences of fragmentation. In that, the state was a rational construct of Panslavist character and, being based on natural law, a building that met the ethical and political needs of all Slavs. Like Czar and Orthodoxy, politics and ethics were mutually dependent and enforced

each other. If ethics were in decline, the state was doomed – this was the irreversible process of Western decay, as Stur observed. For the sake of the empire and the populace, for the whole, justice in terms of respect for Christian-Orthodox principles was of greater relevance than legal and constitutional designs that were proof of a shallow secular conception of life and the world.

Given the minimal institutionalization of the future Slavic state, which idea can convince individuals, particularly those in contact with and tempted by Western ideas, of the rightfulness of the natural social order? Why should a Czech, a Pole, a Croat or a Slovene sustain a system that denies his individual rights? Why make a political step back and give up rights protecting one's, even tiny, free space without legal guarantees? Stur's answer was simple yet in accordance with his Romantic Pan-Slavism. The key concept of Slavic existence, of being a Slav and a member of the Slavic nation, was of an ethical nature: the free will to make a sacrifice based on the awareness that moral acts and an ethical attitude were required for social cohesion. What counted for the individual was his moral attitude, not the feasibility of his goals: "If we alone are the authors of the values, then what matters is our inner state – motive, not consequence."[106] Stur believed that the Slavs can be won over to his state. This required time, as the unfolding of moral awareness was a process. In the Slavic state, freedom was a matter of the rightful moral disposition - time would bring about the political conditions for the union. The sacrifice required an individual ethical disposition that featured resolve in public affairs and community matters.

Stur's state was a romantic creation, a reflection of Hegel's idealistic state. For the grand work, the draft of the

future state was Stur's main concern. He expected the Slavs to offer sacrifices out of free will; indeed, they must be convinced of the moral value of the sacrifice. Stur's claim for the sacrifice as basis of social cohesion was essentially romantic and based on the premise that moral conscience can be improved and perfected. Slavic values had to be improved by the Slavs, not by enacting laws valid for every culture. This moral disposition was not called for by an entity outside the nation, like Kant's categorical imperative, but was inherent to every Slav. In that, sacrifice and moral disposition were essentially subjectivist. For Stur, Kant's categorical imperative was a universal method that had to be applied by everybody, as it was based on reason. Reason was not necessarily the tool providing legitimacy to all moral decisions. Sacrifice and moral disposition were essentially Slavic, hence subjectivist,[107] and every Slav should be convinced, not coerced, to comply. Stur wanted the Slavs to understand that their values, their traditions and political customs were critically different from those of the West.

It can further be said that Stur favored appeals as a method to engage in political dialogue and discredited rights. Targeting an individual's ethical disposition, appeals evoked compliance and empathy, while rights led to disheartening commitments and a wrongful conception of sympathy. If one acts morally only because of the law, compliance is not an essential moral act. One acts out of fear of sanctions. One's intention is not to contribute to the general wellbeing, but to avoid legal sanctions. Rights and the law divide the citizens and contribute to their increasing isolation. Rights also have a long-term damaging effect. The law, which distinguishes individual behavior in the public and private spheres, prevents citizens to develop an ethical attitude toward society, because situations and opportunities which otherwise would entice one to act ethically, are provided by

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[106] Isaiah Berlin, "The Romantic Revolution. A Crisis in the History of Modern Thought', in *The Sense of Reality. Studies in Ideas and their History* (London: Pimlico, 1996), p. 185.

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[107] *Ibid*., p. 188.

the law. Rights enhance selfishness when they can be changed according to selfish wishes. Men can change laws, but it is much harder to change the fundamental moral nature of the sacrifice. The absence of individual sacrifices amounts, according to Stur, to unwanted revolutions and upheavals based on a morally wrong premise: rights as the essence of freedom. Unlike citizens of the Hegelian state, those in Stur's state guarantee social cohesion by preventing economic and social misery through moral sacrifice on behalf of the whole. Individual rights do not reward the moral act of sacrifice. In exchange for sacrifices one gets the sacrifice of fellow citizens when in need, illness and poverty. Sacrifice is a mutual bond. The community's wellbeing and preservation is based on sacrifice: mother and father sacrifice themselves for their children's' upbringing and education.[108] Not a single church could be built without community members' willingness to invest time and money. How could a state exist if not through the contributions by its citizens? For Stur, sacrifice replaces law as a moral guarantee more binding than the laws: "Do we believe in truth, do we appreciate acts that are not sealed by a sacrifice?"[109] As the ultimate moral guarantee of the actors, the sum of sacrifices creates and maintains social cohesion.

If sacrifice can be ultimate proof of rightfulness, how to deal with the refusal to offer sacrifices? How to punish the sacrilege? We could say that individuals tied together in dense social net lacking rewards and based on sacrifice do not act out of free will. Social sanctions punish the sacrilege which violates trust. On such 'anti-social behavior," to use a modern formula, Stur does not elaborate. He trusts his Slavic brothers.

For Stur, man-made restrictions, limits, principles seemingly endorse moral issues like individual freedom but

are not legitimate. The state requires a set of laws, rights and a constitution mirroring the spirit of the free Slavic nation, but only a minimum, since moral principles of religion and sacrifice are legitimate enough to replace laws. Stur's freedom is based on the exact opposite of the Western notion as absence of oppression and right to individual decisions: the sacrifice, renunciation of rights, the unity of emperor, church and populace set Slavic brothers free. For Stur, the future lies in the Slavs' moral belief that giving up the Western idea of freedom leads them to their own Slavic freedom. We could add that freedom in Stur's terms also means freedom from ideas and institutions.

Stur's lack of concrete suggestions for how to organize the future Slavic state and unify the 'tribes' with Russia raises a metaphysical question: Did Stur draft a virtual state as the symbolic and spiritual future empire of the Slavs? He certainly provides us with political details on the features of the Russian Empire, but fails to suggest concrete means. Is the Slavic state the spiritual home of the Slavic Diaspora to which the tribes will return once liberated from foreign domination? Or should we understand his state as a real political empire? In 20th century, Soviet hegemony over Eastern Europe came close to the territorial dimensions of Stur's state. I think that Stur's primary intention was to call for a new political movement to raise the spirit and enhance the Slavic identity of the Austrian and Balkan Slavs.

The intellectual crafting of the Slavic state was more important for Stur than the state's feasibility or details of its formation. Stur was perfectly aware that his draft lacked pragmatism: "It is not the Slavs' business to make plans and to draft the specific details of the state's structure and legislation" and "this business of hair-splitting regulations is to be left to the bureaucrats, for whom all our tribes feel

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[108] Stur, *Das Slawenthum,* p. 64
[109] *Ibid*., p. 64.

indescribable repulsion."[110] Not petty details, but a grand idea, not Hegelian dialectics but the Hegelian spirit, and above all the grand Romantic creation were required at this point of history. Herder's Romanticism appears in Stur's last words: "Raise your long oppressed hearts, Slavs, and have the courage for action with the help of God! Humanity is at stake."[111] Russian thinkers did not disappoint Stur's hope that his words were understood correctly. Konstantin Aksakov, Aleksander Herzen and Nikolaj Danilevskij contributed to the promotion of Pan-Slavism. The 1878 liberation of Bulgaria seemed to anticipate the future: the Panslavist mission seemed to be the first step of a new Russian policy that would lead to the union of all Slavs.

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[110] *Ibid*., p. 228.
[111] *Ibid*., p. 237.