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Historical Consciousness of Young People in Europe at the Turn of the Millennium

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Summary

The paper analyzes the general structure and coherence of the historical consciousness of young people in five clusters of European countries, using the results of the international study *Youth and History* of 1995. The analysis suggests there are two main patterns of historical thinking and the construction of historico-political identity that the author calls *works of historical progressivism* and *the forge of patriotism*. These modernist schemes of thought, grounded in the conflicting perceptions of the nation, democracy and Europe, make historical consciousness ambivalent. The coherence of historical consciousness is somewhat lower in the countries of Eastern Europe, which can be explained by the impact of the “neuralgias” of the collapse of socialism and the discontinuity in social, political and cultural spheres as expressed in the ideological cleavages of that time. In the postsocialist Central-European countries on the other hand, this coherence is the highest, the fact that the author attributes to the radical shift from the ideology of socialism and the domination of the cleavage traditionalism-occidentalism.

Key words: historical consciousness, disciplinary matrix, works of historical progressivism, forge of patriotism, ideological cleavages, Jörn Rüsen



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Introduction

In the semantic confusion of the technologized civilisation (see Kemper, 1993: 7) which can be likened to an accelerating carousel there has been a tendency of “turning away from the stable and ‘hard’ history in favour of the shifting and ‘soft’ memory (ethnic, social, group, class, racial, gender, per-

sonal and others)” (Ugrešić, 2002: 278) i.e. the assumption about the untenability of history in the traditional realistic sense (Munslow, 1997: 16). There are only representations in and about the past, and nobody can claim they know the past as it really was. Each historical notion is conditioned by historians’ attitudes and is relative (Cipek, 1995: 183). Although there is a civilisational bias towards the so-called reality effect, knowledge (or representation) and reality (or the represented) will always differ (cf. Ankersmit, 2001: 280). Despite the fact that history, as being grounded in the uncontestable notions of truth, objectivity, and referentiality,¹ is challenged, it can refer to the new and more challenging questions about how we gain knowledge about the past. That is why we find acceptable the notion of history as cultural practice i.e. *self-conscious narrative composition written in the here and now that recognizes its literary form*, not merely as its mode of report but as *its essential cognitive medium* (see Munslow, 1997: 164). In the very least, history is structured by its form as much as by its content. In historical understanding, “the compulsion of experience” plays as big a role as “the compulsion of language” (Rorty, 1967 in Ankersmit, 2001: 32).

The starting point of this paper is the assumption of the plurality of history stemming from the unavoidable fictionality of narration,² which to a large degree depends on the changeable standards of “interpretative communities” i.e. of professional historians and official interpretations of the past that shape basic perceptions about the identities of political communities (e.g. from constitutional preambles to textbooks).³ In that context we can ask ourselves what the various effects of historical representations on general population and its internal segments are i.e. their constitutive and formative influences on historical consciousness as a part of a culture of *populus*. Simply said, the multiplicity of meanings of historical texts should be manifested in the variability of historical consciousness. Historical consciousness as a concept is not limited to the past’s temporal dimension (through which the history conceives itself) but also to the present (in which and for which history is always written) and to the future (in which history puts hopes of its

¹ A term used to designate a general belief in the largely unproblematic or adequate match between reality (event, person, thing, process) and its description (linguistic expression) (Munslow, 1997: 188).

² Although historical argumentation must be exposed to intersubjective inquiry and to critical challenges to its validity, it is invariably a result of a memory on the one hand, while on the other its viability depends more on the impression it leaves on readers than on any correspondence with past events (see Biti, 20001: 404). “Historical truth” is a construct stemming from the correspondence of an account with the expectations of the reading public. This highlights the question of how much such an intersubjectively verified discourse of the historical community with its alleged reasonableness genuinely does away with the myths, prejudices, and manipulations of everyday “life-world” histories (see Biti, 1000b: 12).

³ On the analysis of history textbooks, see more in Cipek (1995) and Baranović (1999).

own validation). Thus defined research subject encompasses cultural memory, values and political attitudes, and socio-political expectations in the studied societies.

One of the fundamental questions in studying historical consciousness is what kind of a picture of the general structure and the organization of individual dimensions of thus defined (and surveyed) historical consciousness can be represented. We will try to give an answer to this by analyzing the results of the international study “Youth and History” conducted in 1995,⁴ focusing on both the common and the specific aspects of different European regions. Particular attention will be paid to the analysis of the differences between the European East and West caused by the “neuralgies” of the recent collapse of the socialist system i.e. the differences in the internal coherence of historical thinking both in the regions that have undergone radical changes and in those that have had a legacy of social, political, and cultural continuity.

Before we start analyzing the mentioned problems, let us define the concept of historical consciousness and the one possible matrix of its production.

Historical consciousness: the concept

Various authors agree that historical consciousness can be defined as a complex connectedness of the interpretations of the past, the perceptions of the present, and the expectations in the future concerning giving meaning to the experience in time and to the experience of change in narrative structure (Jeismann, 1985, 1988; Rüsen, 1989, 1994; in Angvik and Borries, 1997a: 36).

Before it was used in the deliberations about historico-political education (see Jeismann, 1988, 1992), and in the research about the effects of historico-political socialization (Borries, 1991; Borries/Angvik, 1994; Angvik/Borries, 1997), the concept of historical consciousness had been used in historiography. Its purpose was to identify the features of historical thinking and the knowledge of individual epochs, cultures, historians, etc. i.e. to develop an awareness of those features of historical thinking that belong to the realm of unquestionable norms, paradigms, or projections into other cultures in order to, according to Jörn Rüsen, “prevent or correct any hidden cultural

⁴ More than 32,000 15-year-olds took part in the research. The study’s purpose was to analyze the orientations of teenagers to history as a school subject and the content of their historical consciousness. The managers were Magne Angvik (Bergen College, Norway) and Bodo von Borries (Hamburg Universität, Germany). In Croatia the coordinator was Professor Ivan Šiber (University of Zagreb).

imperialism or misleading perspective in comparative scholarship” (1996: 8).

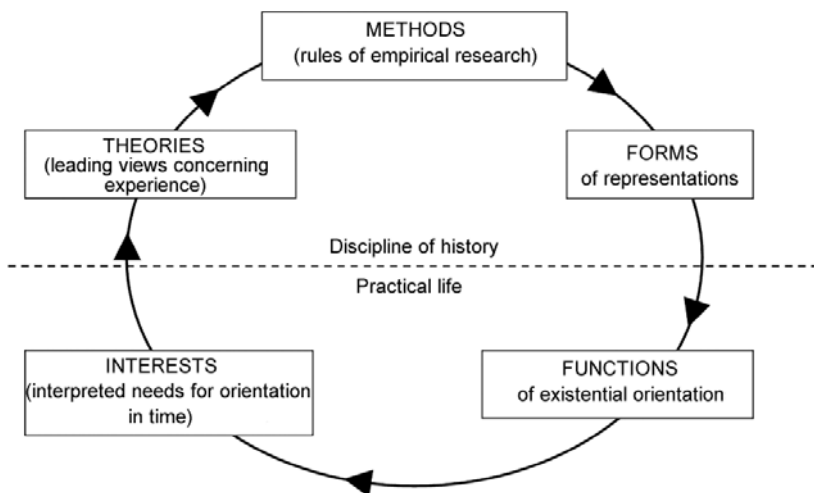
The central element of historical consciousness is the *way of making sense of history* which is defining for the logic of historical interpretation, the poetics and the rhetoric of the shaping of representations and the possibility of understanding the past as something relevant and significant for the present-day orientation of a culture (ibid.). This is a kind of an “orientational symbolism” (Chang, 1987: 7) or the “general interpretation of life and world” that would allegedly more or less enable to the people to “maintain coherence and order in the universe of meaning”. When history is concerned, the fundamental process of making sense of history is manifested in the concepts of time and temporal change that define the relationship between past, present and future. There are two basic functions of the thus defined historical consciousness: the temporal life orientation and the creation of historical identity (see Rüsen, 2001: 7); in other words, the production of historical culture. In this, the leading role in shaping historical thinking would belong to historiography whose task would be the integration of positive facts and principles of temporal order (cf. Rüsen, 1996: 20) in the interaction with the other relevant actors. Thus created historical consciousness can be graphically shown by means of Jörn Rüsen’s disciplinary matrix.

Disciplinary matrix of historical consciousness

Jörn Rüsen thinks that academic history is closely related to the ways in which we live our everyday life (cf. Lee, 2002: 3), but their relation is not a simple, one-sided one in which academic history informs and guides everyday experience. Human interests and the corresponding need for orientation in time make history develop theories on how the world functions. All this, in conjunction with the existing methodological rules and practices, structures the forms of historical representation. This output from the discipline leads back into the world of everyday life by fulfilling, more or less successfully, the function of orientation in time. This would be the shortest possible description of Rüsen’s disciplinary matrix shown in the form of a diagram (*Picture 1*).

Rüsen uses the disciplinary matrix concept in answering the questions of how and why the changes in the paradigms of the discipline of history occur and to explain the ways in which, despite such changes, history manages to get across as a rational approach to the past. The matrix suggests that the paradigm change is the result of the change in the world of practical life that generates a new (cognitive) interest and offers some new possibilities for orientation. However, the changes in the world “below the line” are a neces-

sary but not the sufficient condition for the paradigm change. The change is needed in the entire social order which means in all the matrix elements.



Picture 1. Jörn Rüsen's disciplinary matrix (taken from Lee, 2002: 3)

Rüsen's matrix implies equal influence i.e. "referring" practical life to the discipline of history and vice versa. Nevertheless, from the aspect of the discipline this referral is no mere response to the demands of everyday life e.g. concerning the preservation of national identity. Academic history "produces theoretical surplus beyond the need for identity of acting subjects" which "ought to be seen as the distinctive rational achievement of research-oriented historical narrative" (Rüsen, 1990, in Megill, 1994: 51). Besides, history "transcends the particularity of the 'commonsensical' orientation of action within the life-world" (ibid.). History itself is a historical achievement with its own methodological rules and practices, guided by theory, and can thereby adopt a critical stance towards the interests and demands of *lebenspraxis* (cf. Lee, 2002: 4).

Such a definition of the disciplinary matrix, however, leaves out from the disciplinary aspect (i.e. "above the line") at least two elements. These are the theories from social sciences applied in historical interpretations (e.g. theory of modernization) that together with the above mentioned make up the body of the *theories on historical past*, while the second element would be the metatheories (Rüsen's or the one by Hayden White /1973/), i.e. *the theories on the discipline of history*. Besides, in the original or "autochthonous" genesis of theoretical concepts, the author very generally defines them as the

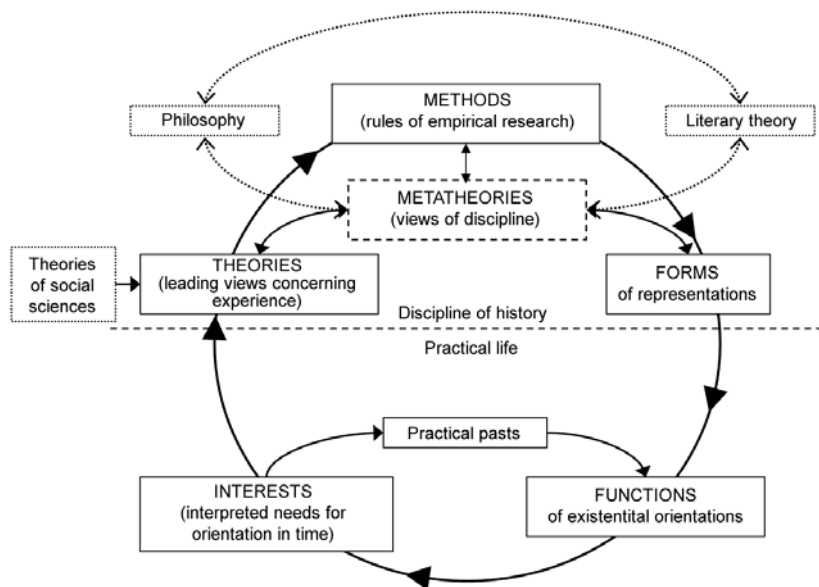
“leading views of experience”, which seems understandable having in mind the dominant mood in the historical guild – the contextualist antitheoretical orientation. However, even in such interpretations of historical past it is possible to glean the implicit theories.

Thus understood, all the three theoretical positions (at least as an attempt at pooling them in a common epistemological field) might be identified with Munslow’s (1997) definition of major approaches to historical knowledge.⁵ Rüsen’s definition of the matrix would best correspond to what Munslow calls the reconstructionist view of history with which Rüsen shares the belief in the classical enlightening role of history and the belief in the existence of *single history*, at least as a justification of the discipline (Megill, 1994: 54), that follows the “road” of *approximate* universal validity. The constructionist view would be the one that “borrows” the explicit theories from social sciences for historical interpretation, most often for the so-called *comprehensive* explanations (e.g. the Marxist school). The metaposition, dealing with the forms of creating historical knowledge, the relationship between the form and the content, the ideological elements of theories, the relativity of historical accounts, the problems of fundamental undecidability, etc. would fall under deconstructionism.

Let us now turn to the life “below the line” and look into people’s temporal orientation that is usually seen as given and necessary, i.e. as the orientation that is not open to the possibility of choice. However, the question is what is the relevant temporal orientation? Must this orientation necessarily include the past that transcends personal memory i.e. can only history provide people with temporal orientation? Lee (2002: 5-7) thinks that in practical life there are the orientations that “pay no attention to history”. This does not mean that such orientations are completely detached from the narratives that history enables, but that they significantly differ from those that derive from the discourse of the methodologically explicit historical research. These orientations stem from the so-called practical pasts (Oakeshott in Lee, 2002: 6), that can assume different forms, depending on the “way of understanding”; for example “popular memories”, legal comments of the past, administrative investigations, propaganda, etc. Such pasts are most often represented as “commonsensical” constructs, and in this *attribute* they are agile in demanding the status of *truthfulness*. However, professional history in itself is often a prisoner of the construct of truthfulness, and is often promulgated as “what happened in the past”, and not as “what can be said about the past”.

⁵ The reconstructionist, constructionist and deconstructionist views of historical knowledge.

As the conclusion of the above thoughts on the disciplinary matrix of historical consciousness “above” and “below the line”⁶ it is possible to elaborate its diagram in the following way (*Picture 2*).



Picture 2. The modified disciplinary matrix of historical consciousness

So far we have tried to show the structure of the production space of historical consciousness; now let us focus on one of the elements of that space – the existential orientation in time i.e. the effects of the discipline on the understanding of its representations. The data base will be the research of historical consciousness of young people in Europe carried out in 1995.

Aims of the research

The first aim is to lay out the general structure and connectedness of individual dimensions of historical consciousness by analyzing the partial correlations of five clusters of European countries calculated in the original

⁶ The elements of the practical pasts in the matrix are taken from Lee (2002: 6).

study⁷ (see Angvik and Borries: A50). Our intention is to show the characteristic features of historical thinking in Europe at the turn of the millennium i.e. the basic mechanisms of the production of the orientation in time by means of history.

Our second aim is to try to identify the differences in the coherence of historical thinking between the East-European and the West-European countries i.e. the transitional countries in which socialism recently collapsed as opposed to the regions with a somewhat longer legacy of social, political, and cultural continuity. The assumption is that due to the positive effect of the democratic tradition and the more enduring stable role of historico-political socialization, in West-European countries historical consciousness will in general be more coherent.

Method

The field work for the research of the major international comparative study “Youth and History” was carried out in 30 countries during 1995.⁸ In Croatia it lasted from 6 February to 16 March. The participation was completely anonymous, both at the level of schools and individual pupils. In Croatia, out of 1,027 pupils only two refused to take part. During two school lessons, the pupils (in front of the coordinator and the classroom teacher) replied to the questionnaire that had 281 variables at the manifest level.⁹

⁷ There were separate analyses for the “Nordic countries” (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Iceland), the “Western Central Europe” (Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, and Italy), the “South Europe” (Portugal, Spain and Greece), the “Eastern Central Europe” (Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Poland), and the “Eastern Europe” (Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Russia, and Ukraine). Apart from allowing the highlighting of the results characteristic for individual regions (clusters), this kind of analysis enables a very simple comparison and identification of the common features of historical consciousness.

⁸ Some may perhaps find the recency of this research questionable as it was conducted ten years ago. However, this should not be a problem since on the one hand we are dealing with the basic mechanisms of historical orientation which, it is assumed, are not the attributes of only one generation but are relatively stable cultural features. Hence the analyzed dispositions will be exclusively at the level of the so-called second-order factors. On the other hand, although there have been some smaller or bigger changes in the contents of the secondary school history in the studied countries, the basic form of representation and teaching of history has remained the same. Also, our measurement instruments registered the general contents characteristic for entire Europe. That is why we think that what after these ten years characterizes most of those participants is only a bigger experience in using general patterns of historical thinking that will be outlined later; the relationship among individual elements of these patterns might have become stronger or weaker. We believe that there have been no crucial restructurings.

⁹ The questionnaire (in English) can be found in Angvik and Borries, 1997 (pp. A442-A468); its Croatian version, slightly modified, can be found in Blanuša, 2004 (pp. 159-174). For

The target population were the first-year high-schoolers, mostly 15-year-olds. The theoretical reason for choosing this population was that political attitudes and views of history have developed to a certain degree at that age (Angvik and Borries, 1997: A27); also, this age bracket “optimally reproduces the existing social consciousness” (Šiber, 1996: 113).¹⁰

The total European sample included more than 32,000 respondents, ranging from 829 (Sweden) to 2,107 (Germany), stratified for each country in line with the country’s educational system and the populations’ heterogeneity¹¹ for the sake of the biggest possible representativeness. Where possible, an ample number of members of ethnic-linguistic minorities was included for more “serious” statistical analyses.¹²

Due to the complexity of the studied phenomenon and a large number of the variables, we have analyzed the partial correlations only for the second-order factors, previously calculated by factor analysis. The dimension “perceptions of the present”¹³ included the value orientations of cultural protectivism (named as conventional pragmatism in the original study), fundamental altruism, traditional nationalism (authoritarian traditionalism in the original study) and the values of privacy and materialism (materialist privatism in the original study).¹⁴ The dimension the “interpretation of the past”

more details on the operationalization of the used model of historical consciousness, see in Blanuša 2002 and 2004.

¹⁰ The basic assumption of the research of this age group is that their opinion is the “society’s mirror”; the question, however, is to what degree views and attitudes at that age are integrated into the value system and to what extent they express and justify certain political views. Accordingly, it is assumed that older generations should manifest a deeper integration of historical interpretations and values.

¹¹ E.g. in Italy, besides the basic sample a special sample was used in south Tyrol for the three linguistic-ethnic groups.

¹² The reason for this special interest in minorities lies in the distinctiveness of their social legacy in relation to the majority population and the possible differences in the significance of the same past events, which can often be conducive to the conflicting perceptions of the present and the perspective of the future. About this topic in Croatia, see e.g. Blanuša, 2002.

¹³ See the basic definition of historical consciousness on page 2.

¹⁴ These four value orientations make the so-called synchronic foothold of culture i.e. the basic criterion for present perceptions. Each of them is further made up from the following values and judgements expressed as the first-order factors: *cultural protectivism* (importance of preservation of old monuments and rare, justifying hypothetical annexation by ethnic identity and international consensus, willingness to grant civil rights to assimilated, loyal immigrants, voting in favour of solving environmental and women’s issues, favouring colonial reparations according to the principle of guilt/compensation, and importance of solidarity), *fundamental altruism* (colonial reparations according to the principles of wealth and solidarity, civil rights for all immigrants, importance of solidarity, and voting in favour of internationale economic aid to less developed countries), *traditional nationalism* (ethnocentric values, obedience to enforced mar-

included the positive and the negative associations to historical periods,¹⁵ and the dimension “the expectations from the future” the following three factors: personal and social optimism, general expectation of conflict, and wish for political participation. Also included among the temporally integrative perceptions are the associations to the identifying constructs of history: nation, democracy, and Europe.¹⁶ In each analysis and picture, we have included as relevant all the correlations above 0.15.¹⁷

The results

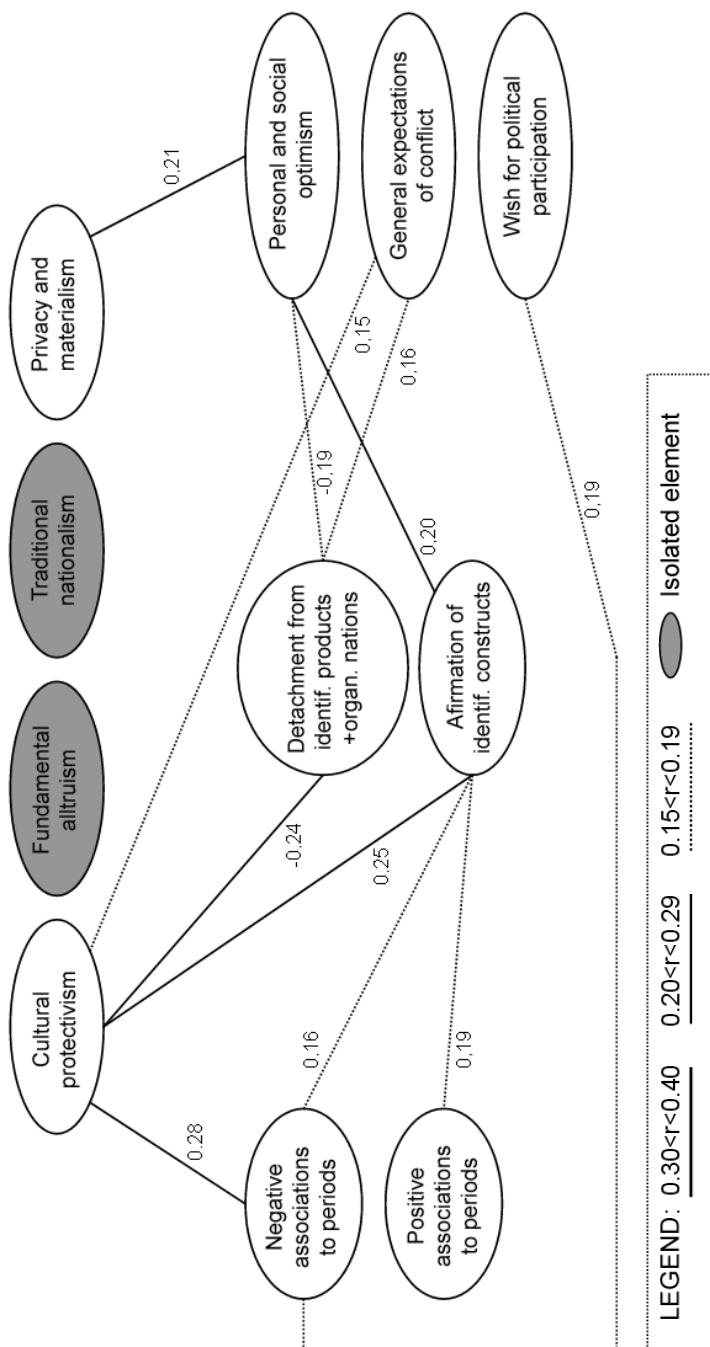
The results of the five discrete analyses for each cluster of the countries are shown on the following diagrams, starting with the Nordic countries; the Westeuropean diagram follows and then the Southeuropean cluster; the last two pictures refer to the clusters of Centraleuropean and Easteuropean countries i.e. post-socialist states. In each picture the dimension of the present (i.e. value orientations) is on the top; on the left is the dimension of the past (i.e. associations to historical periods); and on the right are the expectations of the future; in the middle are the integrative associations to historico-political constructs.

riage, justification of a hypothetical military aggression with dominant position and violence, and importance of preserving modern monuments), *privacy and materialism* (the importance of privacy and family life, of money and wealth, and merited wealth as reward for hard work).

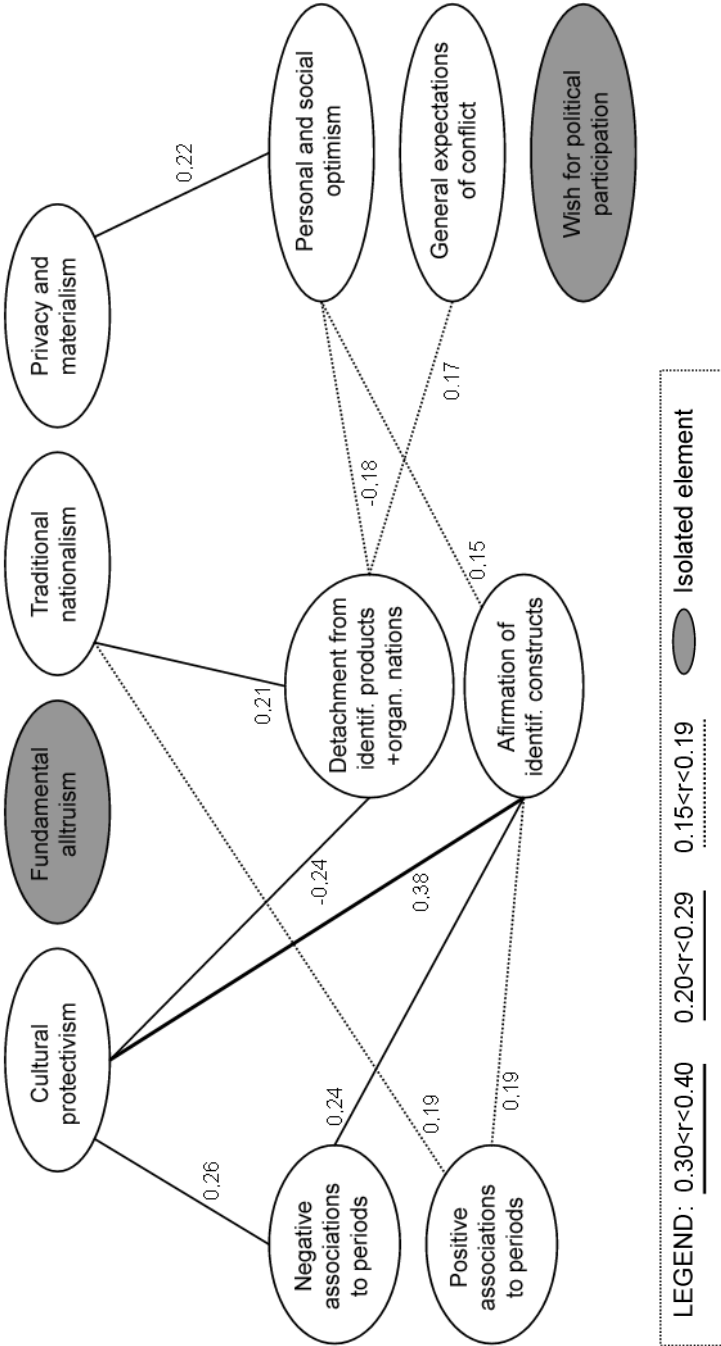
¹⁵ The first-order factors that make up the negative perceptions are: *The Middle Ages as a period of oppression and conflict*, *Colonization as a period of exploitation and Industrial revolution as an deterioration of the society and the nature*. The positive perceptions are made up of: *The Middle Ages as a glorious period*, *Colonization as a period of adventure* and *Industrial revolution as material progress*.

¹⁶ These are two second-order factors. One refers to the affirmation of identifying constructs i.e. positive association to nation, democracy, and Europe, while the second factor includes, besides detachment from democracy and Europe also the organismic understanding of the nation. In the first factor the positive attitude to the nation was expressed in the acceptance of the “classical” definitions of the nation by means of common origin, culture as well as the willingness of its members to shape a common future. This combination of the Herderian and the Renanian definition in this factor in all the studied countries the authors explain as the result of the sedimentation of their significance due to their enduring presence in the public discourse, the reason why young people consider them as obvious.

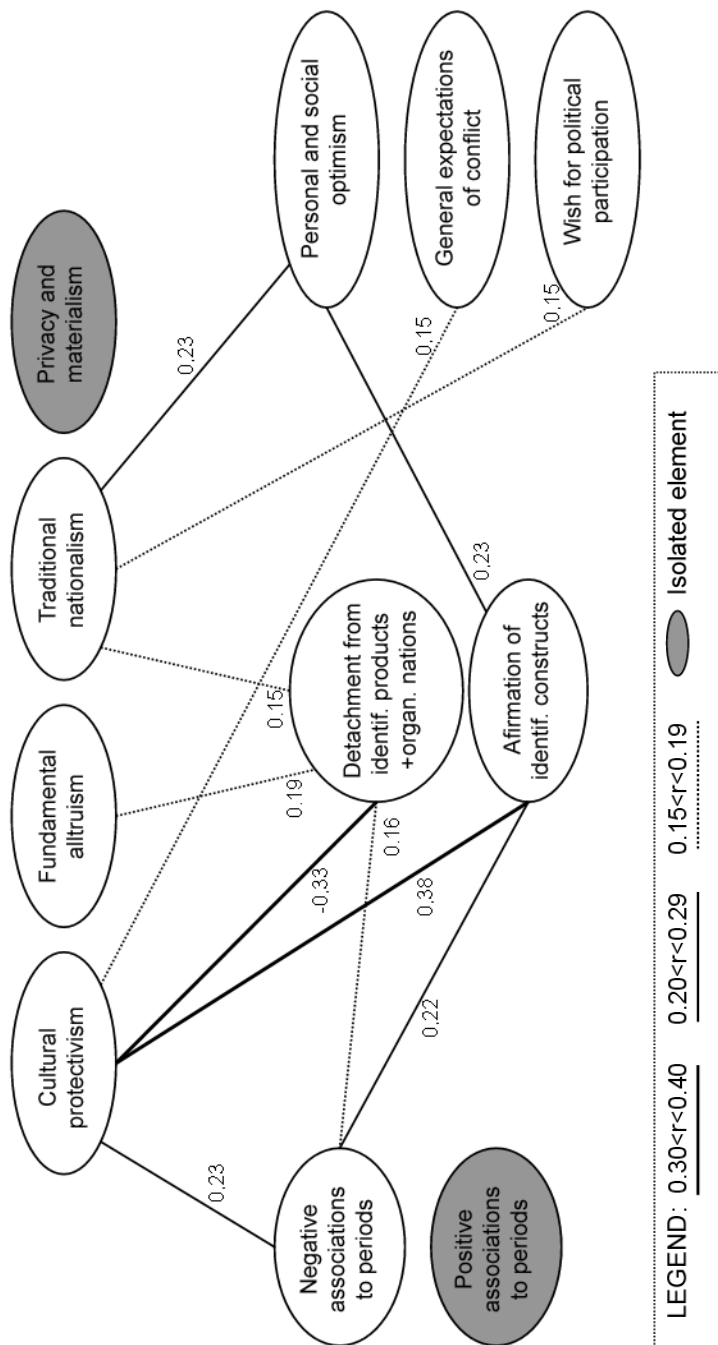
¹⁷ Although the question of the level of the so-called substantiality of correlations is arbitrary, usually those above the range of 0.20-0.30 come into this category. That is why our threshold of 0.15 might be considered to be too low. It has been chosen, as has been already mentioned in footnote 9, due to a weaker general integration of historical consciousness of that age group, so that even somewhat lower correlations were taken as the “trace” of the thinking that in the future might become “deeper imprinted”. Also, these are partial correlations, as a rule lower than the “regular”, bivariate correlations, to which the mentioned range criterion is applied most often.



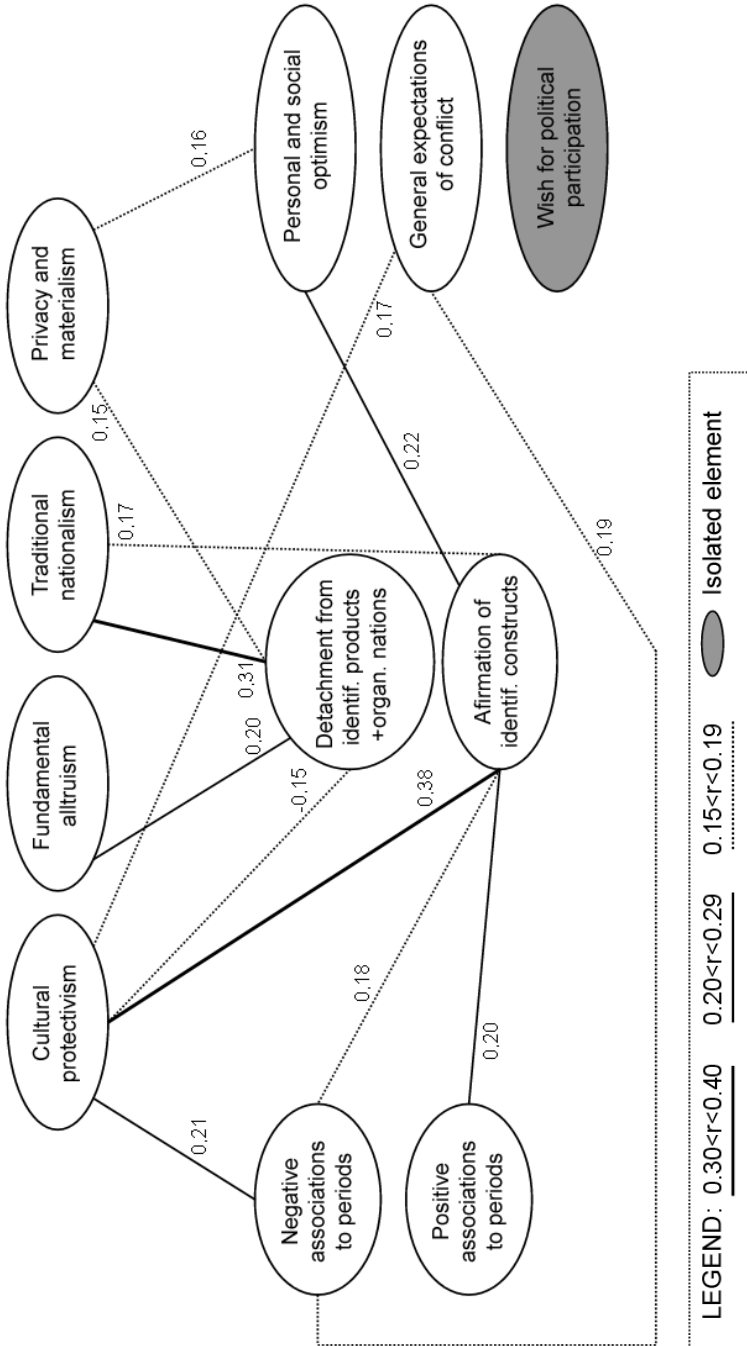
Picture 3. Partial relations of general factors of historical consciousness in Nordic countries.



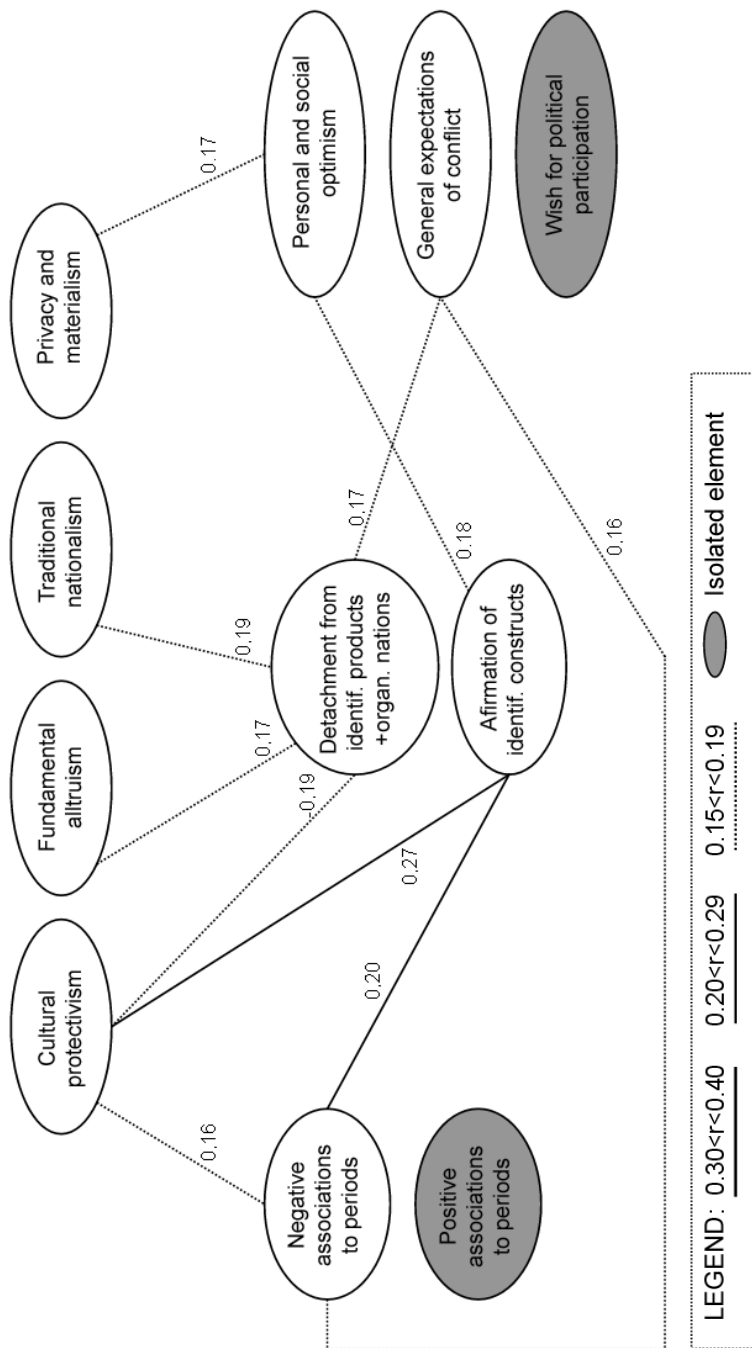
Picture 4. Partial relations of general factors of historical consciousness in Western Europe.



Picture 5. Partial relations of general factors of historical consciousness in Europe's South.



Picture 6. Partial relations of general factors of historical consciousness in Central Europe.



Picture 7. Partial relations of general factors of historical consciousness in Eastern Europe.

General structure of historical consciousness and regional particularities

By comparing the accounts of the “regional” structures of historical consciousness, the common – the so-called *core triad* of positively related elements – may be identified: *negative associations to periods*, *cultural protectivism* and *affirmative association to identifying constructs of history*. This is an approach that might, if channelled towards the critical awareness of shortcomings, mistakes or injustices in the past, help to rectify them and preserve and affirm various communities, identities and rights, within the political frameworks of the conventionally defined nation, the democratic system and the broader and integrative European space. Also, cultural protectivism as a value base of this kind of thinking in all groups rejects detachment and scepticism to democracy and Europe, as well as the organismic concept of the nation. The described historical opinion probably holds those constructs as unquestionably positive values in themselves and represents its conventional aspect.¹⁸ Also, the more affirmative the association to historico-political constructs, the more pronounced and positive the expectation of the future, both at the personal as well as on the broader social level of prosperity. Having all this in mind, such an optimistic pattern of historical thinking may be understood as the foundation for a type of *critical intellectual skills* in historical judgement. Of course, these relations imply the opposite pole of this thinking which would probably reject history and its constructs and be historically uninformed and unmotivated¹⁹ – in a word presentist – and would include pessimistic and catastrophic expectations of the future.

Taken altogether, this pattern of historical thinking is obviously modernist and as such reflects the faith in progress and the enlightenment’s optimism and efforts to overcome the constraints of the past hampering progress. This thinking implies the possibility of moral emancipation by means of “learning on historical mistakes”. That is why it can be considered as the *works of historical progressivism*. Of course, this is not materialistic progressivism,²⁰ but a pattern of thinking whose criteria of the desirability of ex-

¹⁸ It would be interesting to see whether the bigger immediate experience with the analyzed constructs changes these “idealist” attitudes.

¹⁹ At the level of individual samples the general motivation for history is related to cultural protectivism at the level of 0.20 to 0.30, while the negative associations to historical epochs range from 0.14 to 0.21, except for Eastern Europe (0.09), where the coherence is generally lower. The element of motivation to history is not included in the diagrams not to complicate them too much.

²⁰ The relation between the value of *privacy and materialism* and *personal and social optimism* appears in four out of five clusters (see *Pictures 3-7*) and which, expectedly, does not show any relation to historical past.

istence and action are similar to – otherwise called – postmaterialist values, are integrated into the metanarrative on continued enlightenment.

In all the clusters there is also the relation between the general motivation to history (see footnote 19) and traditional nationalism. While in the north of Europe traditional nationalism remains – just like fundamental altruism – isolated from other elements of historical consciousness, it is related in all other groups to the detachment from the identifying constructs of history and to the organismic concept of the nation. Concerning the attitude to the identifying constructs, the higher prominence of nationalist tendencies includes the propensity towards the suspension of democratic values and the scepticism towards the European integration, as an expression of the need for internal homogenization and the “unequivocal” attitude to the Others. The factor of the organismic understanding of the nation contained the opinion based on the definition of how nations emerge and grow but also how they come to ruin just like everything else; in order to survive they have the right fight for their own state. Nevertheless, when trying to save themselves i.e. to stop destroying each other, it is desirable for the nation-states to give up on part of their sovereignty in favour of a supranational organization.²¹ Its link with the factor of traditional nationalism (see its description in footnote 14) is expected and understandable.

In the Westeuropean cluster traditional nationalism is also related to the positive associations to historical periods i.e. to the “glorious past” by which nationalist ideologies lay claim to the attribute of ancientness,²² but it seems that such an idealistic support of nationalism does not exist in the other clusters, not even in the south of Europe, where their pre-national pasts might serve for the same purpose.

The clusters of south, central and eastern Europe have another thing in common besides nationalism: the influence of fundamental altruism on the detachment from the identifying constructs of history. This relation might be a consequence of the experience with the totalitarian and unstable situations characterizing those countries’ recent past, in which the preoccupation with it and the existing political relationships through fundamental altruism produces a kind of antipolitics of unconditional solidarity, realized in the format of the organismic notion of the nation.

²¹ Such an opinion might represent a Hobbesian variation of social contract applied to supranational unification, the reason for which may be justified only when starting from the negative state of existential threat. In its extreme form, this conservative opinion may be formulated in the following way: “Unless survival is at stake, it is better to preserve the status quo as we do not know whether we are going to be better off united.”

²² It is interesting how traditional nationalism in that cluster was most related to the association to the Middle Ages as a glorious period ($r = 0.15$).

And finally the postsocialist countries in which, apart from the above, traditional nationalism is related to the preference of the immediate to the distant future,²³ which means the past of their own emancipation from communism, most probably the cornerstone of the perception of one's own importance. Besides, only in central Europe there is also the supporting relation of nationalism to the affirmation of historical constructs, which undoubtedly has something to do with the basic liberalizational-democratic orientation of the national movements of these countries in the early 1990s.

The analyzed set of the elements of historical consciousness surrounding the motivation for history, traditional nationalism, the organismic understanding of the nation, and the detachment from the other constructs of history structuring with the other elements in line with the regional-specific perceptions of one's own status in the past, we call the *forge of patriotism*. That is the part of historical thinking within which the loyalty to a national community is socialized, the community seen in the organismic, integrative way, namely as the one that "...extends back into history and forward into the future through inter-generational solidarity." (March in Pusić, 1997: 105).

Let us now turn to the other elements of historical consciousness. Out of the plethora of elements of the associations to future, the element most related to the others is personal and social optimism that is mostly supported by the above mentioned values of privacy and materialism, and the associations to historical constructs. While in the European north and west there is a steady and opposing influence of the affirmative and the detached relation to historical constructs, in the other clusters the dissatisfaction with them has no consequences for the expectations of accomplishment and wealth on the personal, national and European level. On the other hand, it seems that the expectation of social problems and conflicts is affected by the dissatisfaction with constructs or/and cultural protectivism. In the latter case, this might mean that the readiness for the protection of identity and rights, as well as for the preservation of historical and natural landmarks partly includes the expectations of an increasing significance of these issues in the future, and the possible future conflicts. Besides, it seems that in post-socialist countries the expectations of future conflicts are affected by the perceptions of negative past events, which might be an indication of their perceptual prominence i.e. visibility and remembrance, depending on the level of turmoils in their societies.

²³ That factor is also not represented in *Pictures 3-7* as it would only complicate the diagram and make it "illegible". The partial correlations to traditional nationalism for Central Europe are $r = 0.23$ and $r = 0.21$ for Eastern Europe.

Unlike the previous two elements of expectations, the wish for political participation remains in three clusters a completely isolated element of historical consciousness. While its absence in the East-European and Central-European clusters comes as no surprise due to the social legacy of an authoritarian culture of political conformism and passivity, this result in the West-European cluster is totally unexpected. Even the Nordic countries do not stand out in the integration of this element into the other aspects of historical consciousness; only critical thinking about the negative aspects of historical periods galvanizes young people to political participation and consequently to their involvement. In Europe's south, on the other hand, the participation in political activities and in exercising political freedoms, as well as social optimism, are supported by more pronounced nationalist tendencies. It seems that in this orientation of political consciousness 15-year-olds are still not experienced enough and involved enough to be able to respond more.

Coherence of historical consciousness in different parts of Europe

In order to determine the general level of internal coherence of historical consciousness of individual clusters, three indicators may be used: the total number of substantial correlations, their average value, and the number of the isolated elements of historical consciousness. The results are listed in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Indicators of internal coherence of historical consciousness of five clusters of European countries

	Number of correlations	Average value of correlations	Number of isolated elements
Central Europe	13	0.21	1
Western Europe	11	0.22	2
Southern Europe	11	0.22	2
Nordic countries	11	0.20	2
Eastern Europe	10	0.19	2

The obtained results only partly confirm the original assumptions that the post-socialist cluster will demonstrate a generally lower coherence than the countries with a longer social, political and cultural continuity. While the differences among the average values of the correlations are not big, the other indicators clearly point to the conclusion that the highest coherence of

historical consciousness can be found in the Centralearopean cluster, and the lowest coherence in the Easteuropean countries. How to explain this?

The reason for a higher coherence of historical consciousness of young people from the Centralearopean postsocialist countries in relation to the young people from Eastern Europe can be found in the difference among the dominant ideological cleavages in these countries in the early 1990s. The typical polarization pattern for the Centralearopean countries, both for the old and the new states, was traditionalism-occidentalism (cf. Kasapović, 1996: 145-7), and for the Easteuropean countries the dominant and enduring cleavage was prosocialism-antisocialism. It seems that within the first framework primarily the identifying historical constructs had a bigger significance for both cleavage poles,²⁴ a manifestation of a more radical detachment from the ideology of socialism;²⁵ this ideology in the countries of Eastern Europe was a powerful or even dominant alternative. Because of this a bigger coherence was primarily manifested in that part of historical thinking which we hold responsible for the socialization of loyalty to the national community. This does not refer only to the part that defines the nation organismically and establishes it by juxtaposing it to other forms and aspects of political existence, but also to its concept as a culturo-historical achievement, together with democracy and Europe, related both to the critical and the positive association to historical periods as well as another expression of national self-awareness.

In comparison with the other clusters in which the established socializational patterns have been reproduced for some time, which means that their contents to a large degree have obtained the status of truisms, in the Centralearopean cluster, probably due to the then current motivation for the clearest possible self-definition of identity, these patterns of understanding play a more significant role in historical consciousness, and are hence expressed in higher correlations.

Conclusion

This paper suggests there is the general correspondence in the forms of historical thinking of young people from countries with different historical legacies, starting from the common elements and the patterns of relation-

²⁴ Liberal democracy would be a value in its own right, Europe the central element of occidentalism, and the nation the axis of traditionalism.

²⁵ Although in the Centralearopean countries the polarization pattern socialism-antisocialism has not been "extinguished" entirely, as proved by (according to Kasapović, 1996: 147) the return of the left to power in Poland (1993) and Hungary (1994), as well as its renaissance in Czech Republic (1996).

ships among them – provided, of course, that such thinking is not solely the consequence of the used methodology oriented towards the general historical content of the European continent, at the level on which national particularities were not included. However, the results have shown enough interesting differences which we have tried to explain contextually and by referring to some more fundamental historical processes. The analyzed relations are stochastic and moderate, not complete. Let the readers decide on the impression regarding the (un)correspondence of expectations.

We claim that the two general patterns of historical thinking – the works of historical progressivism and the forge of patriotism – are the basic mechanisms of the production of historical subject i.e. its identity. In both mechanisms the attempt at taking on an identity is by forming a certain perception of the Other, the different, including the detachment from that different Other, together with the identification with certain values and specific definitions of historico-political constructs. Regarding progressivism, the Other belongs to past epochs and times (see footnote 14) which are labelled as outmoded and morally inappropriate, while regarding patriotism the Other is branded by the ethnic, cultural and territorial distinctiveness which gains the temporal dimension by being integrated into the image of nations as bodies i.e. social organisms that constantly and evenly make their way through history (cf. Anderson, 1990: 33). In the first case the past is measured by the standards of the present that serve to the projection of the ideal of existence in the future, and in the second the present is designated on the basis of an imaginary past for the sake of a sense of continuity that creates a feeling of security and alleviates the anxiety of individual existence. The scheme of historical progressivism thus serves to the idea of civilizational progress, while the scheme of patriotism serves to the self-definition of distinctiveness, sufficiency and/or even superiority in relation to others, particularly in the situations of perceived threats.

However, these two *coexisting* schemes of identification include completely opposing perceptions of the nation, democracy and Europe. In short, while the scheme of progressivism includes the correspondence of these three historico-political constructs, in the scheme of patriotism there is a certain “entrenchment” concerning the idea of the nation as opposed to the other constructs. These schemes make historical consciousness inherently ambivalent and historical identity divided between the demand of the “Reason” and the expectations of the “Loyalty”,²⁶ between what history shows as

²⁶ Although *demand* and *expectation* imply some external influence, they can be understood also as the internalized, subjectively perceived internal motivations to adopt the mentioned forms of thinking and behaving.

universal achievement²⁷ and the particular legacy and features of one's own national community. Of course, both schemes represent historically contingent particularisms and both have emancipatory as well as hegemonic potentials.

Concerning the emotional potential, the scheme of patriotism seems much more powerful, which means that the eurosceptic discourse should be taken much more seriously than previously and that a more detailed analysis of the gap between the political elites and the citizens of individual states regarding the Euro-integration should be attempted. On the other hand, one should bear in mind that "affective investing is a contingent, historically determined reality associated with the shifts in collective identification" (Stavrakakis, 2005: 86). This does not, however, mean overnight changes but a long process of restructuring the symbolic and the emotional aspects of identification, within the highly uncertain system.

Besides these common patterns of historical thinking we have tried to determine how noticeable at the time of the research were the effects of the discontinuity in the cultural, social and political sense caused by the collapse of socialism, and manifested in a lower general coherence of historical consciousness. While in Europe's far east, mostly in the former Soviet republics, this effect was an expression of the ideological cleavage centred around the identification or the anti-identification with the old regime, in the Centra-European post-socialist countries there has occurred a stronger identification with the new regime. The ideological conflicts centred around the primacy of the "return of the repressed" in the form of the nation or Europe. Such ideological structuring led to a higher coherence of historical consciousness in relation to the other clusters. It seems that social antagonisms transformed into agonisms²⁸ among political adversaries within democratic pluralism can have an integrative effect on historical thinking and represent a significant step towards the *modus vivendi*.

²⁷ It should not be forgotten that the idea of progressivism found its hegemonial expression in colonialism that almost always integrated the idea of backwardness into the notion of non-Western societies and civilizations, or projected onto them the image of their own past, dumping them into the same framework. By explaining the precolonial history of colonized peoples as a "tragic tale of wars, massacres and slavery" (Spurr, 1993: 34), colonialism utilized three concepts: *humanity* which requires universal development; *the colonized*, who need protection from their own ignorance and violence; and *nature*, which requires a wise utilization of its resources (ibid.). This is, to say the least, a very clear example of an attempt to establish one's own particularities as universal perceptions (cf. Laclau, 1995; Biti, 2000: 191).

²⁸ See e.g. Mouffé, 2000. In Croatia, on agonistic democracy see Cvijanović, 2004.

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