

**On the path from the stereotypical depiction of ‘the other’ to
reconciliation through the recognition of a true picture of ‘us’**

History education in Europe since the 1950s through case studies of France and Germany,
and Slovakia

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FOREWORD

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The theme and the main research question

Nationalism is a widely discussed historical topic with yet much left for further discussion. There are numerous reasons to support this claim. First of all, nationalism has since the time of its emergence spread throughout the world, shaping the ‘human thought and society according to its image’.² A vast amount of literature has been written both praising and condemning nationalism, trying to define the terms ‘nation’ and ‘nationalism’ and trace their origin, theorizing the influence of nationalism on various aspects and realms of life and society, and explaining historical events shaped by it. However, the notion of nationalism is so complex that there is still room for more theorizing, explaining, defining and judgments. Furthermore, after the Second World War, popular opinion had it that nationalism is a notion to be condemned after the nationalistic ‘excesses’ of the Nazi regimes. It seemed that nationalism would lose its position due to the globalizing and uniting trends in Europe. However, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, nationalism has experienced amplification due to the need of self-determination of the new countries which emerged from the revolutionary changes in the organization of the Eastern Block. Last, but not least, the question of possible creation of a supra-national European identity is being shadowed by the strengthening of national feelings throughout Europe due to the already mentioned need for self-determination, or due to fear of loss of identity caused by open borders and ethnic minorities searching for asylum or new home in particular countries. Nationalism thus seems to be far from ceasing to exist and, ironically enough, as ‘global communication, multinational trade and the break-down of borders take hold, discussions about and interest in ‘the nation’ are as vibrant as ever’, as very convincingly argued by Robert Phillips, an internationally recognized scholar in the history of history teaching and in concepts of national identity.³

An inseparable element of the notion of nationalism is national identity. National identity is created in the people of a nation by various attributes, such as a common territory, language, traditions, history narrative and education, history education in particular.⁴ Spiritual aspects of the national identity cannot be omitted. It is one’s identification with a nation that makes a nation extraordinary in the eyes of its own people and ‘typical’ in the eyes of outsiders. With this fact,

2 Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York 1946) VII.

3 Robert Phillips, ‘Reflections on history, nationhood and schooling’, in Martin Roberts (ed.), *After the Wall. History teaching in Europe since 1989* (Hamburg 2004) 39.

4 David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford and New York 1995) 24.

other feelings, such as national pride, emerge, and are hard to overcome. National consciousness makes one aware of the bond with the nation one belongs to.

Throughout the history of nationalism, there have been different means of fostering the national consciousness and the development of national identity. Among these, language and spoken or written word, literature and history narration and education have been among the most important.⁵ The development of ‘national languages’ and literature and history written in them – facilitated the spread of nationalistic ideas to all the people of a nation. The fact that people eagerly adopted what history narrative propagated, made the governments and nationalists, since the emergence of nationalism in eighteenth century, use and abuse history narrative - and since the nineteenth century also history education – for nationalistic propaganda.⁶

Since the end of the twentieth century, history education became an attention-demanding part of the creation of a European identity. The reason is obvious – political and economical unification alone has not sufficed for European unity. If a nationalistic division of Europe and the accompanying national identities are fostered in young people through history education received in the formative period of their development, there is hardly any room left for the creation of a European identity needed for the ‘spiritual’ part of European unification. In the early 1990s, as Robert Stradling claims, ‘the disappearance of the so-called Iron Curtain [...] paved the way for the emergence of divisions and psychological frontiers which had lain dormant since 1945’.⁷ The assertion of national aspirations led to violent (former Yugoslavia) but also peaceful (former Czechoslovakia) divisions and nationalism was strengthened in various scopes of the existence of the countries, history narration and history education including. History educators in Western Europe saw the ‘red flags’ of a danger of inclination to nationalistic orientation in history education in the newly emerged countries. In 1990s history education in Western Europe still had a ‘neutral’ character – in other words, nationalistic interpretations were laying dormant, due to the horrific experience of the Second World War and the necessity to reconstruct Europe on a quite different, than nationalistic, base. Western history educators thus desired to help their Eastern colleagues to set off on the same path and the calls for abolishment of national histories and the emergence of a European dimension in education became more frequent. Furthermore, as already mentioned, globalization and open borders brought fear to many Western countries witnessing an open flow of migration of people from Eastern parts of Europe and the globe. The fear of loss of identity resulted in a ‘closure’ and many countries have witnessed the boom of national canons

5 Adeed Dawisha, *Nation and Nationalism: Historical Antecedents to Contemporary Debates* (Malden and Oxford 2002) 16-19.

6 E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York 1990) 80-100.

7 Robert Stradling, ‘Political and Social Change in Europe since 1989’ in Roberts (ed.) *After the Wall*, 21.

and renewed eagerness to concentrate on national history in history curricula.⁸ Last but not least, one cannot omit the growth of the European Union and with it connected growth of fear in some of its countries of the loss of national sovereignty. European membership is connected with falling of some aspects of a country's sovereignty under the European competence. Some countries – such as Great Britain – with their glorious past and confidence in their uniqueness, have a hard time excepting it. Moreover, when in certain fields, such as monetary policy, it would be more advantageous for countries to be able to keep their sovereignty. History education can be stated as another example, as many countries consider it something belonging to the nation and not to European authority, as they want to the pupils to know the history of their nation and not European organs to decide what is good for pupils to know, so that they become good Europeans.

In the time of changes in the beginning of the twenty first century, it is thus interesting to research the development of such an important formative element as history education, because it is one of the elements indicating the direction of Europe's development. History education has been one of the indicators of further development or decline of nationalism in European countries. It is therefore instructive to ascertain whether history education has been contributing, and will contribute, to European unity or whether Europe will continue to be characterized by its diversity which makes it – in the eyes of some – unique?⁹ Hence, the main research question of this thesis is: *How has the role of history education been changing in the nations of a politically uniting Europe since the 1960s, in relation to the choice between either the strengthening of national consciousness or promoting European unity?*

1.2 The aim of the thesis, approach and methods

The main aim of the thesis is, clearly, to provide an answer for the main question. To do so, a closer look at last decades is necessary. The sub-questions, converging to the central question, are an asset to research the situation in Europe, in connection to history education, since the 1950s, and even more closely since the end of the twentieth century. Before the sub-questions can be introduced, the temporal borders and approach of the topic need to be discussed. A further aim of this research project is to contribute in a small way to the debate on overcoming versus strengthening of nationalism since the last decade of the twentieth century. Moreover, it is important to research the political involvement in the educational reforms of European countries,

8 Maria Grever, 'Plurality, narrative and the historical canon', in Maria Grever and Siep Stuurman (eds.), *Beyond the Canon. History for the Twenty-First Century* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007) 32.

9 Alix Kroeger, 'Germany seeks joint history book', *BBC News*, 2 March 2007; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6411047.stm> (day accessed: 03-01-2011).

and explore the thin line between abusing history for nationalistic aims and abusing history for supra-nationalistic aims. This thesis thus also aims at shedding some light onto this highly sensitive issue. Last but not least, differences in the changes in history education in Eastern and Central, and Western Europe cannot be denied. Attention is paid to the distinguishing elements in history, development and present of the two parts of Europe. One can only draw conclusions on the changes in history education in Europe taking into consideration both Western and Eastern part of Europe. It is often forgotten that they are two parts of one continent, not two separate continents.

The time frame for the purpose of this thesis is bordered by the early 1950s and the present, with small anticipations of the future based on the results of the research. After the Second World War, nations of Europe had to start searching for paths to reconciliation. The reformation initiatives turned into economic and later political co-operation, such as the European Coal and Steel Community and European Economic Community. Once economic and political co-operation on a satisfactory initiatory level was achieved, a spiritual division needed to be bridged. Based on this argumentation, the beginning of changes in history education can be traced to the 1950s, and so making it a natural starting point of the research in this thesis. The end point is the present, as the aim of the thesis is to evaluate the situation of history education, in connection to nationalism, in the present and also to express assumptions about the near future.

As the topic of the changes in history education since the 1950s is very wide, it is approached through a case study. This case study is an analysis of an extraordinary reform initiative undertaken by two European countries with a long history of mutual enmity – France and Germany. In 2006 the first of three volumes of a common history textbook was published claiming to bridge the controversies and differences in the history education of both countries.¹⁰ The development of the political situation in both countries in the ‘age of nationalism’ and parallel development of history education in these countries illustrates how the role of history education has changed in these Western European countries, and paves the way for further discussion and comparison to the Eastern part of European continent. Slovakia and its history education are presented as a lateral case study illustrating a discrepant situation – caused by the reality that Slovakia’s ‘door’ to self-determination and self-government, self-identity and self-government was opened less than two decades ago – in the country of the former Eastern block.

The research of case studies makes use of an analysis of the common French-German textbook and the latest Slovakian history textbook on national history. Furthermore, in the

¹⁰ Daniel Henri, Guillaume Le Quintrec, Peter Geiss and collective, *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt vom Wiener Kongress bis 1945* (Leipzig 2008).

French-German case interviews with the authors, editors and publishers of the textbook are analyzed to observe the discourse within which these creators of the ‘grand idea’ place themselves. In the case of French-German textbook, reviews and newspaper articles reveal how was the textbook accepted in France and Germany and how was it accepted by the rest of Europe. It will be possible to see whether the textbook fulfills the expectations and its representation speaks for overcome nationalism and pan-European view of history. In the ‘Slovakian case’, the analysis of the textbook, together with information provided mainly by newspaper articles and television news, serve as a complement to, and enhancement of, the conclusions drawn from the previous case.

1.3 Sub-questions and chapters

Sub-questions are another important element in the search for an answer to the main question. Before being able to initiate the research, a historical context of the topic needs to be set. In the case of this thesis this context is the phenomenon of nationalism, its history and connection to history education. Two sub-questions are relevant to the historical context: *What role has nationalism and its promotion played in history education? To what extent has history education been abused by nationalistic aims, and is there any appeal for change?* These questions are answered in the second chapter, which introduces the topic and its historical context. This chapter focuses on the assertions and claims of scholars of nationalism and experts in the field of history education. The former help clarify the connection between nationalism and history education. Their works demonstrate how and why history education was used for nationalistic aims. The latter clarify the more recent situation in the field of history education and the recent trends – in the circles of history educators – calling for overcoming of nationalistic, centric oriented histories. These calls were developed in an opposition to the new trends in history education in Western Europe, where intellectuals, but also growing numbers of members of other social groups, insist on more attention for national history and accentuation – through history education – of the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’. The popular belief is that pupils should be taught about what makes the people of their nation unique and different from the ‘others’. Both contribute to creating of a theoretical framework and a base for building and analyzing of the case studies.

Further sub-questions focus on the case studies. Seemingly simple but, at the same time, important is the following question: *Why is the case of France and Germany worth researching?* As an answer to this question an overview of Franco-German relations and the different notions of nationalism in both countries is drawn in the third and fourth chapter. These, together with answers to the question: *How has history education in France and Germany been changing since*

the 1950s?, point to the extraordinarity of the common Franco-German history education initiative. The third and the fourth chapter thus ‘set the scene’ for the case study – the subject of the fifth chapter.

The central question of chapter five is as follows: *What was the purpose of the common Franco-German textbook and did it succeed?* In this chapter an analysis of the textbook and the above mentioned materials, such as interviews, reviews and newspaper articles is carried out. The main aim of the chapter is to show how successful is the textbook in achieving of the set aims, and to show how successful it is in bringing a change into history education. Very important aspect of this Franco-German textbook initiative is its ‘political versus apolitical’ character. A sub-question, *What is the political role of the Franco-German common history textbook?*, aims at clarifying the role of such a large and medialized project. One can argue that it is very difficult to believe that the textbook is purely civilian initiative because the step in reconciliation of the two countries made by its creation is too significant not to create suspicion. Chapter five therefore does not omit a possible connection between the uniqueness of the project and Franco-German position in the heart of the European unification.

Chapter six shifts the focus from the Western to the Central and Eastern Europe. *How have the countries of former Eastern block been dealing with the newly developed need for self-determination since the 1990s?* A presumption can be made that in the early 1990s, the nationalistic sentiments in these countries were strengthened. The reason for this claim can be seen in the need of a nation to build its own identity after long years of forced identification with another strange nation. Moreover, the new nations had to justify their autonomous existence after the boom of nationalistic feelings resulted in bloody, and peaceful, divisions of some countries. As discussed before, one of the ways for nations to strengthen national consciousness and create national identity is through history education. While in the West the strengthened unifying tendencies since the 1990s resulted in conferences and initiatives to connect nations – also – by history education, in the East the centric oriented nationalistic histories were without concurrence. *Are there nowadays realistic possibilities for Central and Eastern European countries to overcome the strong nationalistic tendencies and set off on the path of common history education, just as Germany and France have done?* Chapter six, besides the general discussion on the situation in the former Eastern block, also provides an example of dealing with the problematic of self-determination and dealing with ‘the other’ in the history textbook of one of them - Slovakia.

The last chapter draws conclusions from the research of the changes in history education since the 1950s. It sums up the findings about the role of history education in the process of nation building and draws conclusions on its immense importance for the creation of a national

identity through praising the history of a particular nation and creating stereotypical images of the 'others'. Furthermore it sums up the outcome of the Franco-German history textbook initiative and its possible influence on other European countries and so its potential of becoming a forerunner of a common European history textbook. This debate develops into discussion whether projects like Franco-German history textbook, are a step to a 'true' European unification or whether projects in history education, aiming at creation of a common memory, are yet another form of political action following national interests. Another good point to discuss is whether there is any difference between propaganda of nationality and European supra-nationality. One can wonder whether the efforts to create a European identity do not abuse, or will not abuse, history education in the first place. Together with the outcomes of the research into history education in the former Soviet block country, the conclusion provides an answer for the main research question. It summarizes how history education has been changing in the nations of uniting Europe since the 1950s, primarily in relation to nationalism versus creating of European consciousness. In other words, the conclusion expresses what is, by examples and analysis, shown throughout the previous five chapters.

1.4 Historiography

An extensive number of books, articles and studies have been written on nationalism. These mostly discuss the origins of the phenomenon, as well as the notorious difficulty to define it due to the large number of characteristics that can actually be considered as defining. Is it the spiritual aspect that is important and should dominate the definition? Or is it the territory, language, religion, customs or history that should form the core of the definition? Is it the eighteenth century that marks the birth of nationalistic sentiments or can the origins be traced centuries back?

For the purpose of this research project, obviously, scholars and their theories discussing the role of history narrative and history education in the process of nation-building were chosen. Ernest Renan, French philosopher and writer, Benedict Anderson, a scholar of nationalism and Professor of International Studies Emeritus at Cornell University, and David Miller, Official Fellow in social and political theory at Nuffield College, Oxford, represent, in this thesis, scholars of nationalism clarifying its spiritual aspect.¹¹ This means that the analysis of studies of the three named scholars illustrates nationalism in terms of spiritual bonds between the members of the

¹¹ Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?', (Lecture at Sorbonne, 11 March 1882);

<http://ig.cs.tuberlin.de/oldstatic/w2001/eu1/dokumente/Basistexte/Renan1882EN-Nation.pdf> (accessed: 15-12-2010); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London and New York 2006) and David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford and New York 1995) .

nation. These bonds, however, have since the emergence of nationalism needed to be constantly strengthened, and one of the means for their strengthening and imposing has been history education. A second characteristic of nationalism, considered crucial for the topic of this thesis, is closely connected with imposing feelings of fraternity. Eric J. Hobsbawm, British historian and author, and Hans Kohn, Jewish philosopher and historian, present nationalism as political program, attributing thus a political function also to history education.¹² History education as a political tool fosters nationalistic feelings through invented or exaggerated histories and through the creation of stereotypical images of ‘the other’. Adeed Dawisha, a professor of political science, further clarifies the importance of the role of history education in nationalistic aims.¹³ These scholars and their studies were chosen as suitable on a base of literature on nationalism read during the research. These were the books or articles written by the scholars themselves or related articles in which their names appeared in connection with nationalism and history education.

The next sub-chapter of chapter one presents the current situation – the claims and beliefs of Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, an executive director of European Association of History Educators, EUROCLIO, Rolf Wittenbrock, historian and a member of steering committee working on the creation of a common Franco-German history textbook; Martin Roberts, history teacher and founding member of EUROCLIO; Nicholas Tate, a British historian; and Maria Grever, a professor of theory and methodology of history, will illustrate the situation of history education in connection to promoting and fostering of nationalism in recent years.¹⁴ Majority of these authors and their articles were found in the volumes of EUSTORY, a series published by non-governmental organizations active in the field of history education in Europe, or while researching the archives of EUROCLIO and the Centre for Historical Culture at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam.

German historians Otto Dann and John Dinwiddy edited a study on nationalism in the time of the French Revolution which is important for the purpose of this research project because

12 E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York 1990) and Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism. A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York 1946).

13 Adeed Dawisha, *Nation and Nationalism* (Malden and Oxford 2002).

14 Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, ‘Europe in the Learning and Teaching of History’, in Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (ed.), *History for Today and Tomorrow. What does Europe Mean for School History?* (Hamburg 2001); Rolf Wittenbrock, ‘European Experiences of Writing Common History Textbooks’, contribution to the International Conference in Korea: ‘Shared Memories and Plural Universalities’ (Seoul 2010); Martin Roberts, ‘The origins of Euroclio – one perspective’, in: Martin Roberts (ed.) *After the Wall. History teaching in Europe since 1989* (Hamburg 2004); Nicholas Tate, ‘History and National Identity’, in Roberts (ed.), *After the Wall* (Hamburg 2004) and Maria Grever, ‘Plurality, narrative and the historical canon’, in Maria Grever and Siep Stuurman (eds.), *Beyond the Canon* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007).

the creation and differences in French and German nationalism can be traced precisely to this time.¹⁵ Moreover, a detailed exegesis of the French Revolution and the ideas that triggered it, later served as explanation of the origins and concept of French nationalism. The creation of a German identity in response to the newly emerged French identification with their nation and their expansionist claims will be illustrated with the help of the book by Harold James, a former Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge and professor of history at Princeton University, and Robert Reinhold Ergang, German historian and professor specializing in European history of Renaissance and nationalism.¹⁶ Their works are important and relevant for this research as they analyze in detail the roots of German nationalism and are more descriptive than philosophical, which was necessary for creating an objective picture of the beginning of era of nationalism. Changes in history education of France and Germany and their mutual dialogues since the 1950s will be illustrated with the help of the UNESCO reports of bilateral consultations on history textbook.¹⁷

In 2008 an extensive study on the history of Franco-German relations has been compiled from a number of articles by various historians. It provides an in-depth overview of French-German relations since the time of French Revolution up until the recent years.¹⁸ This book has been created in a time of friendship between France and Germany and their uniting initiatives, such as the common history textbook. It can therefore be used as an objective source providing a view on the history of Franco-German relations.

The second case study – the character of history education in Central and Eastern Europe, represented by Slovakia, since the 1990s – will be researched through a collection of studies on Slovak national identity and its roots edited by Slovak historians, Tibor Pichler and Jana Gašparíková.¹⁹ The already mentioned volumes of EUSTORY series will help to draw a picture of the political and educational situation in the former Soviet countries.

The sources listed above serve as the secondary literature for the purpose of this research project. As for the primary sources, they were partly created for the purpose of this thesis and consist of interviews with the authors and editors – Peter Geiss, Guillaume Le Quintrec, Rolf

15 Otto Dann and John Dinwiddy (eds.), *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution* (London and Ronceverte 1988).

16 Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990* (London 1989) and Robert Reinhold Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (New York 1966).

17 Report from Franco-German Congress at Tubingen, August 1952 and Tours, August-September 1953, in: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'International Understanding and Co-operation: Documents relating to improvement of textbooks and teaching materials' (Paris 1954).

18 Carine Germond and Henning Türk (eds.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe. From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners* (New York and Hampshire 2008).

19 Tibor Pichler and Jana Gašparíková, *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation. Slovak Philosophical Studies I* (Washington, 1994).

Wittenbrock, Reiner Riemenschneider, Reiner Bendick – and publishers – Illias Körner Wellerhaus and Francoise Fougeron – of the Franco-German history textbook. These interviews were obtained by the author of this research project through e-mail correspondence with the Georg Eckert Institute (further GEI), an institute for the research of history textbook from all around the world²⁰, and the above named members of the creators' team.

Primary sources further consist of reviews of the second volume of the common Franco-German textbook by historians from the GEI. An opinion of an Eastern European historian about the textbook is represented by the review written by a Polish historian Wojciech Rozskowski.²¹ The view of the European public is represented by newspaper articles published in: *The Telegraph*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde*, *Deutsche Welle*, *The Times* and *Pravda*.

The primary source for the Slovak case study is a history textbook published in 2008, dealing with Slovakian national history.²² It is thus a very recent history textbook, relevant for the research of the situation in history education in connection with nationalism in the present day. From the analysis of the text presented to the pupils by the textbook, one can draw conclusions about the present position of nationalism in Slovakian history education. Furthermore, the newspaper articles, the same as in the Franco-German case study, will provide a lot of useful information on the history education in Slovakia. This is mostly through the articles about the intended initiative to create a Slovakian-Hungarian history textbook.

20 <http://www.gei.de/de/publikationen/eckert-dossiers/europa-und-die-welt/europe-and-the-world.html>, (accessed 26-01-2011).

21 Wojciech Rozskowski, 'Opinion on French-German Secondary School History Textbook *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt vom Wiener Kongress bis 1945* and *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt seit 1945*' (EUROCLIO archives, accessed 18-02-2011).

22 Alena Bartlová and Robert Letz, *Dejepis: Národné Dejiny III* (Presov, 2008).

Chapter 2 National identity and its fostering through nationalistic discourse in history education

2.1 Identity or *The question of identification with a nation*

As identity is the basic presumption for the existence of nationalism, it is necessary to create a working definition of the term and discuss its significance for an individual and a nation. 'Identities are names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past', argues Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist and sociologist.²³ They are created in the context, within the discourse that an individual is subjected to.²⁴ 'We need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies'.²⁵ From Stuart Hall's interpretation of the term 'identity', it follows that identities are both imposed and 'self-made'. They are imposed through the names and social roles created by dominant narratives and 'self-made' by the interpretations of these impositions by families, communities or individuals, and the real historical experiences, as Linda Martin Alcoff, an influential philosopher currently active at the City University of New York, contributes to the discussion.²⁶ Moreover, identities 'emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are a sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity'.²⁷

What does this complex definition of identity mean for a national identity in particular? The assertion of Hall, that the identities are constructed within the play of power and exclusion,²⁸ can be compared to the claim of cultural anthropologists Birgit Meyer and Peter Geschiere, currently active at the Open University of Amsterdam and The University of Amsterdam, that 'identity is employed by states in order to create loyal citizens, as much as by groups opposing the state to legitimize claims to alternative forms of allegiance'.²⁹ It can thus be argued that national identity is characterized as the result of a successful articulation or 'chaining'³⁰ of the

23 Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in: Linda Martin Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta, *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality* (Blackwell Publishing 2003) 3.

24 Stuart Hall, 'Who needs 'identity''?', in: Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans and Peter Redman, *Identity: A Reader* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi 2000) 17.

25 Idem, 17.

26 Linda Martin Alcoff, 'Identities: Modern and Postmodern', in Alcoff and Mendieta, *Identities: Race, Class, Gender, and Nationality*, 3.

27 Hall, 'Who needs 'identity''?', 17.

28 Idem, 18.

29 Birgit Meyer and Peter Geschiere, 'Globalization and identity. Dialects of flow and closure, Introduction', in: Birgit Meyer and Peter Geschiere, *Globalization and Identity. Dialects of Flow and Closure* (Oxford 1999) 5.

30 Hall, 'Who needs 'identity''?', 19.

individual into the flow of nationalistic discourse which creates ‘closure’³¹ of one group, in relation to the other, characterized by loyalty to the nation and exclusion of ‘the other’. At the same time, groups which oppose, or do not identify with, the nationalistic discourse of one particular group can create – based on ethnicity, culture, language, history, religion, territory, and etcetera – a different identity. This identity can then develop into a national identity of a new nation. Nationalistic discourse, within which national identities are created, is thus crucial in the notion of nationalism.

2.2 Nationalism: a ‘spiritual’ or political programme?

2.2.1 Renan, Anderson, Miller and the spiritual aspect of the notion of nationalism

In 1882, the French orientalist Ernest Renan delivered his memorable lecture ‘What is a Nation’ at the Sorbonne.³² The lecture originated from the need to analyze an idea which ‘lends itself to the most dangerous misunderstandings’ – the idea of a nation and nationalism.³³ Nations and nationalism are notoriously difficult to define. Before the modern conceptions of the notion of nationalism, a nation was considered something given or ‘natural’, as one can learn from the article by Elías José Palti, an Argentinean historian who was in 2009 awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship and is currently active at the University of Buenos Aires.³⁴ The course of nation’s development was considered as given and was believed to create a national identity which was different from the identity of all the other nations.³⁵

With his theory, Renan moved away from the assertions considering national identity to be something ‘natural’. He refused the primordial conception and so claimed that nothing is given and to become a part of a nation is a matter of choice. ‘A nation is a spiritual principle, the outcome of profound complications in history, it is a spiritual family not a group determined by the shape of the earth.’³⁶ A similar, but at the same time very unique, notion of a nation as an ‘imagined community’ was introduced by Benedict Anderson.³⁷ It is imagined, according to Anderson, because ‘the members of even the smallest nation will never know of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their

31 Meyer and Geschiere, ‘Globalization and identity. Dialects of flow and closure, Introduction’, 5.

32 Ernest Renan, ‘What is a Nation?’, (Lecture at Sorbonne, 11 March 1882); <http://ig.cs.tu-berlin.de/oldstatic/w2001/eu1/dokumente/Basistexte/Renan1882EN-Nation.pdf> (day accessed: 15-12-2010).

33 Idem, 1.

34 Elías José Palti, ‘The Nation is a Problem: historians and the ‘national question’, *History and Theory* (2001) 324-326.

35 Idem, 326.

36 Renan, ‘What is a Nation’, 7.

37 Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London and New York 2006) 6.

communion'.³⁸ Both conceptions thus treat a nation as a principle based on the feelings and beliefs of people constituting the nation. It is crucial for the members of a nation to be aware of, or to be able to imagine other members of the community and feel bonded to them. This importance is very convincingly supported by David Miller, who contributes to this discussion on the importance of a spiritual principle of nationalism by claiming that national identity is created when a community of people is bonded by 'mutual recognition' and a shared belief, turning the people of a nation into compatriots.³⁹ Anderson explains this 'bonding' by referring to the importance of the term 'community'. It is this term, which stands for the feelings of fraternity among the populace of a nation, that binds it together and makes people 'willingly die for such limited imaginings'.⁴⁰

It can be argued that the claims about the importance of one's will to belong to a nation and a spiritual bond to the nation are of crucial importance in the discussion on nationalism, as they are a crucial element in the creation of national consciousness and national identity without which a nation cannot emerge nor exist. However, one can also argue that the will alone does not suffice for the creation of a nation. For a community to become a nation, a justification of this will, a spiritual bond or an image, such as a shared territory, historical continuity, political institutions, language, religion, etcetera, is necessary.

For Renan, it is forgetting or 'historical error', as he names it, that is an inevitable factor in the creation of a nation.⁴¹ He argues: 'Yet the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also they have forgotten many things'.⁴² Unity is an important characteristic of a nation and it was many times in history achieved by brutal means. To maintain this characteristic, it was indeed often necessary for both sides involved in an internal conflict to forget the brutality and credit the achieved union to the account of fraternity, rather than war. In Renan's 'forgetting' one can see a sign of political element in the notion of nationalism. Open discussion on this element is, however, missing in Renan's theory of nationalism because, as will be discussed further, the political and spiritual elements are very closely connected. The most important part of Renan's theory dwells in the assertion that a nation as a spiritual principle constitutes two elements, one of which lies in the past and the other in the present.⁴³ National identity is, as already stated, created within the historical context and discourses of present.

38 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

39 Miller, *On Nationality*, 22-23.

40 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

41 Renan, 'What is a Nation', 2.

42 Idem, 2.

43 Idem, 7.

In contrast to Renan, Benedict Anderson provides a much greater exegesis on the variables that played a role in constructing the ‘imagined communities’, such as religion and its territorialization, a very important development of print, of state languages, history education, etcetera.⁴⁴ Anderson is making a very valuable point by attributing the origins of modern nationalism to the development of print because the printed word stands at the beginning of the spread of thoughts in the ‘languages of people’ and so the spread of national consciousness creating the collective image. David Miller contributes to the discussion by elaborating on the creation of national languages as a part of the process of creation of national identity: ‘In some cases this might involve transforming a spoken dialect into a print-language by compiling dictionaries and so forth’.⁴⁵ There have been – and still are – many attempts of nations to eradicate the dialects within their territories and to impose the national language on all the people of the nation. The reason is simple and can be derived from the previous discussion on identity. A nation fears that people speaking a certain dialect – thus possessing a different identity – will eventually create their own national language and subsequently their own nation and so secede from the existing nation. Many examples of these ‘language struggles’, which actually create conflicts as well in the present day, can be named. Welsh, Gaelic and Breton are all endangered languages or dialects, diminishing in the spoken form, being replaced by the language of a majority.

National languages triggered the spread of historical narratives. The reason can be searched in the fact that for the first time also ‘ordinary people’ were able to understand the national narratives, spread them further and, what is more, think of them – and the language in which they were narrated – as ‘theirs’. As a result, the history narratives fostered national sentiments, even more so if they were intended to do so. As Anderson discusses, in history narrative, the same as in history education, what needs to be remembered is very well and flowery described and stressed.⁴⁶ On the other hand, what needs to be forgotten either never happened or is falsely described to fit better in a nationalistic discourse. Historical narrative is adjusted for people to forget the anti fraternal feelings and turn them to a memory that reassures brotherhood. ‘Norman William and Saxon Harold thus met on the battlefield of Hastings, if not as dancing partners, at least as brothers’.⁴⁷ Every historical change brings along a need for a new identity and so a new narrative. ‘All profound changes in consciousness [...] bring with them characteristic

44 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 36.

45 Idem, 33.

46 Idem, 201.

47 Idem, 201.

amnesias', claims Anderson.⁴⁸ The new identity is thus fostered by a new historical narrative fitting the profile of the new era.

In comparison to Renan and Anderson, Miller also claims that historical narrative was a victim of the promotion of nationalism because it has, since the emergence of national languages, been abused to strengthen national sentiments. What is different, however, is the take on the role of politics in the process of creating of national identity. Whereas in the theories of Renan and Anderson the role of politics is indirectly mentioned or can only be derived from their arguments, Miller sees the role of power politics in the formation of nations as a primary reason for a history narrative being a victim of the promotion of nationalism.⁴⁹ States have been created by force, and over time their inhabitants started thinking of themselves as compatriots. However, 'no one wants to think of himself as roped together to a set of people merely because the territorial ambitions of some dynastic lord in the thirteenth century ran thus far and no further'.⁵⁰ As a result, national histories have often been adjusted or invented to fit an acceptable picture of the emergence of the nation. Miller thus claims that national identities 'typically contain a considerable element of myth'.⁵¹ 'It is likely to reveal that many things now regarded as primordial features of the nation in question are in fact artificial inventions – indeed, very often deliberate inventions made to serve a political purpose'.⁵² The arguments of Miller are convincing because the role of politics in the creation of national histories is indeed not diminishable. However, as his book defends the principle of nationality, the importance of the problem of abuse of historical narrative by nationalism is marginalized. This fact is rooted in his assertion that national identities, even though they contain a certain amount of falsity, are valid sources of personal identity.⁵³ One can agree that the 'myth element' in national history narratives should not classify national loyalties as unjustifiable because there are many other attributes, such as territory, political institutions, 'life' and every-day actions of a nation, and so forth, that need to be taken into consideration when judging if national identities are defensible or not. However, it can also be argued that it should always be stressed that inventing or misinterpreting of history with an aim to promote nationalism cannot be marginalized. This is for the sake of the accuracy of historical narratives and history education, and since the 1950s also for the supra-national initiatives of the European Union.

48 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 204.

49 Miller, *On Nationality*, 34.

50 Idem, 34.

51 Idem, 35.

52 Idem, 35.

53 Idem, 35-46.

The previous discussion showed the theories on – and importance of – the spiritual principle in the notion of nationality. However, as the discussion of David Miller’s theory on the creation of national identity already implied, a push from ‘above’ often helps to create a national identity. Spiritual aspect of nationalism is both a consequence and a ‘servant’ to the political one.

2.2.2 The power of politics in the notion of nationalism and its evolution up until the 1950s

The subjective elements of will are repeatedly emphasized by Hans Kohn in his treatise on the origins of nationalism in Europe. Hans Kohn was born in 1891 in the Habsburg Empire and grew up in Prague as a Jew among the German-speaking minority which was culturally and socially separated from the Czech majority. One can thus claim that not only he was born in the midst of the development of German nationalism; he also had a ‘first hand’ experience of its power and importance. As he puts it: ‘In few other cities was nationalism as living and all-pervasive a force as in Prague at the beginning of the twentieth century’.⁵⁴

Kohn claims that ‘nationalities as “ethnographic material”, as “pragmatic” and accidental factors in history, existed for a very long time; but only through the awakening of national consciousness have they become volitional and “absolute” factors in history’.⁵⁵ Nationalism, in his assertion, is a ‘state of mind’, an idea that fills the mind and heart of a man with ‘new sentiments, and drives him to translate his consciousness into deeds of organized action’.⁵⁶ The question that one might ask, however, is whose mind and heart and so ‘will and decision’ are involved? Here, the connection of the ‘spiritual principle’ – as it was named in the previous section – and the political principle shows its face. In the course of history, it was indeed the will and decision of the leaders and politicians – rather than peoples – that dominated in the imposition of national consciousness on people.

In 1944, when Kohn’s *The Idea of Nationalism* was published in the USA, where he immigrated in 1934, the war forced him to deflect his ideas from condemning the notion of political nationalism. His dichotomy of nationalism originated in this period. According to Kohn, there were two opposing kinds of nationalism⁵⁷: the Western varieties (English, French and American) were born ‘in a wave of generous enthusiasm for the cause of mankind’, those in opposition to French nationalism, including thus German nationalism, were since their development ‘directed to laudable but narrower goals, self-centered, and antagonistic’.⁵⁸ One can

54 As quoted in: Louis L. Snyder, *The Roots of German Nationalism* (London, 1978) 239.

55 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism* (New York 1946) 16.

56 Idem, 18-19.

57 Ken Wolf, ‘Hans Kohn’s Liberal Nationalism: The Historian as Prophet’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol.37, No. 4 (1976) 665.

58 Idem, 572-573.

argue that he created this dichotomy because the form of nationalism which developed in Germany and in several countries to its east could, obviously, not be defended or looked upon with acceptance. In this way, Kohn could keep his optimistic views of nationalism and defend at least Western liberal values. His dichotomy thus enabled him to accept the political nationalism and, at the same time, remain faithful to his liberal world view. It can be argued that political nationalism needs to be accepted as the national identity is, mostly, created from the ‘top-down’ impulse.

This claim is supported by E.J. Hobsbawm. In contrast to Kohn’s assertion that nationality is not only ‘a group held together and animated by common consciousness; but it is also a group seeking to find its expression in [...] a sovereign state’,⁵⁹ Hobsbawm argues that ‘nations do not make states [...] but the other way round’.⁶⁰ In other words, it is political interest, national agenda and promoted national consciousness that, if successful, create a nation. Hobsbawm considers nations to be ‘dual phenomena, constructed essentially from above’ but being impossible to understand ‘unless also analyzed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist’.⁶¹

Since the time of the American and French revolutions, thus the time when citizens obtained a ‘voice’ and the state ‘needed their practical consent or activity in other ways, e.g. as tax-payers or as potential conscript soldiers’, governments and people were bonded by every-day life.⁶² In the era of revolutions and wars, the state needed to awaken patriotism, the feeling for ‘my’ country, and make men prepared to fight and die for it. In other words, the earlier discussed spiritual principle – feelings of fraternity, bonds with a nation – needed to be fostered by the state. An ‘imagined community’ had to be bonded together and to a state by ‘things in common, places, practices, personages, memories, signs and symbols’.⁶³ This was even more so in the period from 1880 to 1914 – the period of the greatest mass migration, imperialism and ‘growing international rivalries ending in world war’.⁶⁴ The differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ grew; and ‘governments had a considerable domestic interest in mobilizing nationalism among their citizens’.⁶⁵ This is a very important point of Hobsbawm’s exegesis of nationalism where a

⁵⁹ Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 19.

⁶⁰ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 10.

⁶¹ *Idem*, 10.

⁶² *Idem*, 80.

⁶³ *Idem*, 90.

⁶⁴ *Idem*, 91.

⁶⁵ *Idem*, 91.

contrast to the theory of Kohn is clearly visible. One can argue that it is very idealistic of Kohn to try to deny the role of politics in the creation of national identity, because since the emergence of modern state, governments influence the life of a nation to a great extent to keep the control over its people. States use effective means to communicate their interests, to ‘light the fire’ in people for their case, to promote the unity of the nation, to underline the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and to awaken the national consciousness among ‘us’. ‘Naturally states would use the increasingly powerful machinery for communicating with their inhabitants, above all the primary schools, to spread the image and heritage of the ‘nation’ and to inculcate attachment to it and to attach all to the country and flag, often “inventing traditions” or even nations for this purpose.’⁶⁶ This assertion can be considered to be one of the most important in Hobsbawm’s theory, as it explores one of the most effective ways in which national consciousness, fostered by the state, was spread. Together with national languages (discussed by Anderson and Miller), education – in particular history education – and history narration have been since the nineteenth century, when the educational system developed, the most efficient means for the fostering of national consciousness and the creating of a national identity.⁶⁷ ‘While governments were plainly engaged in conscious and deliberate ideological engineering, it would be a mistake to see these exercises as pure manipulation from above.’⁶⁸ They were indeed, as Hobsbawm wisely claims, the most effective when they could build on already existing nationalist sentiments.

After the First World War, the principle of nationality triumphed as a result of a newly emerged need for self determination, as well as the need to draw a line between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in the newly created multi-national states after the defeat of the ‘prisons of nations’ as E.J. Hobsbawm names the old empires.⁶⁹ ‘Whereas before 1914 the characteristic national movement had been directed against states or political agglomerations seen as multinational or supranational [...], after 1919 it was on the whole, in Europe, directed against national states. It was therefore, almost by definition, separatist rather than unifying.’⁷⁰ Extreme forms of this distinguishing and separatist kind of nationalism resulted in the Second World War, and with it contributed to the downfall of the popularity of nationalism in the post-war period. Moreover, the Cold War shifted the interest of world politics from a large number of separate nation-states to the bi-polar world consisting of two groups of ideologically linked nations.

66 Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 91-92.

67 Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, ‘Europe in the Learning and Teaching of History’, 16.

68 Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 92.

69 Idem, 133.

70 Idem, 139.

The previous discussion on the evolution of nationalism and creation of national identity is important because one cannot engage in further discussion without ‘setting the scene’. In other words, one cannot simply place the notion of nationalism in the present time without explaining how it developed into the present stadium. It is important to distinguish between ‘the nation (qua ‘ideological construction’)’ and ‘the national subject (qua ‘imagined community’)’.⁷¹ As the previous discussion aimed to show, they are both necessary and self-influencing and enforcing. As Elías José Palti puts it, ‘So nationalist discourse is trapped in an ever-flowing cycle in which it appeals to an objective entity – ‘the nation’ – to serve as the framework and basis of individual members’ identity, and also appeals to individual members’ subjective choices as the creator of the nation’.⁷² As stated, when discussing the notion of identity, an individual is subjected to discourses which create his identity. Nationalistic discourse with all its means of imposing a national identity, chains the people to a particular nation. It is thus, as Elías José Palti claims, ‘necessary to resist projecting an objective reality (the ‘people’) as existing beyond discourses, thereby reducing the performative moment to the constative one’.⁷³ It can be argued that the ‘performative moment’ seeks to create a narrative of the community that will foster the nationalistic sentiments. An important part of this narrative is the history of a nation. As concluded through the theories of previously discussed scholars, history of a nation is interpreted, adapted and even invented through history narratives and history education abused and used for nationalistic aims. Nationalistic discourse is one of the political performative means for the creation of national identities bonding people, by feelings of fraternity and attachment, to a nation.

To combine objective and subjective elements of the notion of nationalism and simultaneously combine, to a certain extent, theories of previously discussed scholars, a theory of Anthony D. Smith, an important British theorist and sociologist, can be used to define nationalism for the purpose of this research project. It can be considered a political and ideological movement for the ‘attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity of a human population some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential nation’, and in turn it can be seen as a ‘named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and memories, a mass public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members’.⁷⁴

71 Paul Piccone, ‘The Tribulations of Left Social Criticism: Reply to Palti’, in: Elías José Palti, ‘The Nation as a Problem: Historians and the “National Question”’, *History and Theory* (2001) 342.

72 Elías José Palti, ‘The Nation as a Problem’, 343.

73 Idem, 344.

74 Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford 1999), in: Martin Roberts (ed.), *After the Wall: History Teaching in Europe since 1989* (Hamburg 2004) 40.

2.3 History narration and history education in connection with nationalistic agenda

‘History has for some time been recognized by historians, as well as by political scientists and sociologists, as important – perhaps the most important – factor in accounting for a sense of national identity’, as Phillips put it.⁷⁵ It is the tradition, memory, heritage and history that give a notion of continuity and persistence over time to a nation. This notion of continuity is a very important characteristic of a nation, as it gives the feeling of security to its inhabitants. Their nation was, is and will be here, and past, present and future generations can identify with it. For the alternating generations to identify with a nation, history narration has to ‘suit’ the era and its needs, as also discussed by Benedict Anderson. History thus becomes not a product of a past but ‘merely a response to the requirements of the present, as the nation seeks justification for its existence’.⁷⁶ ‘Historiography, school history, museums, heritage, historical literature, archeology, etc., are forged into a collective memory which encourages the members of the nation to be associated’ with the ‘imagined community’, ‘spiritual principle’, ‘political programme’ or ‘ideological movement’, which, in the words of theorists of nationalism, represent a nation.⁷⁷

To use the well-chosen words of Adeed Dawisha from his article on the historical antecedents to contemporary debates on nationalism: ‘Most important to nationalists is the spoken and written word, since all seem to agree that this is the medium through which national consciousness spreads. [...] A language-based medium is the writing of history, which aids the development of national consciousness’.⁷⁸ History is the primary tool to elevate the importance of a nation rooted in the greatness of its past. It is the tool to awake the feeling of pride and create a strong national consciousness. As Adeed Dawisha claims, it is not history as an academic discipline, but history as a political instrument to be used and manipulated for national aims that nationalists seek.⁷⁹ ‘It should be of no surprise that throughout history, nationalists of all persuasions have emphasized primarily education.’⁸⁰ It is through history education that the desired kind of history is taught for the purpose of creating a national consciousness in the formative period of one’s identity.

75 Robert Phillips, ‘Reflections on history, nationhood and schooling’, 40.

76 Idem, 40.

77 Idem, 40.

78 Dawisha, *Nation and Nationalism*, 16-17.

79 Idem, 18.

80 Idem, 18.

2.4 History education and the second half of the twentieth century

Since the 1950s the discussions about the position of nationalism in Europe have been very vibrant. They are obviously connected to the bad name nationalism acquired during the Second World War and the idea of a united Europe. The path to international understanding and reconciliation started to be searched through committees working on the development of historical consensus on controversial issues in European history. An example of such a committee and long co-operation is the ‘Franco-German Agreement on Controversial Issues in European History’ of 1951.⁸¹ This committee was established as a continuation of the pre-war discussions on a reconciliation of the two countries through a common look on their history which had long been causing division through controversial issues seen differently by each side. In the 1970s and 1980s a process of educational reforms experienced a boom and a greater number of meetings and discussions were organized about history education. However, it was not until the 1990s that the intensity of these discussions strengthened because of the destruction of ‘The Wall’ separating the West from the East. With the changes in Europe and the extended scope of the Council of Europe, it became possible to review and critically evaluate history education across Europe. Moreover, with the signing of the Schengen Agreement in 1985, which created Europe’s borderless Schengen Area, the wave of globalization and new trends in communication, it can be argued that history education could not possibly have remained without attention and observation. A progressing unification, combined with migration, ethnic minorities and their identities mixing with the identities of ethnic majorities did not allow for the European structures to concentrate only on the economic and political sphere of the ‘European program’. A spiritual aspect of the unification was, and still is an essential – yet missing – element for the creation of a European identity.

In recent decades there have been many differing opinions on history education in Europe. Most scholars claim that the influence of nationalism is still great and needs to be diminished; Euro-enthusiasts are of course of the same opinion, only with added emphasis on the necessity of the creation of a supra-national identity. Opposing them are Euro-skeptics who do not believe in the possibility of one European nation or who believe that it is either desirable or inevitable to preserve national identities.

⁸¹ Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, ‘A common textbook for Europe? Utopia or a Crucial Challenge?’, EUROCLIO (Den Haag 2008); http://www.culturalhistorica.es/joke/textbook_for_europe.pdf (day accessed 10-12-2010).

2.4.1 Nationalistic approach as continuously dominant element of history education

An outspoken critic of the nationalistic dimension in history education is Joke van der Leeuw-Roord. In 1993, when the association she directs was founded, history education in most European countries had an ‘unmistakable centric or nationalistic approach’.⁸² The main goal of EUROCLIO was to create a more international focus in school history education ‘without favoring any sort of European canon of knowledge’, thus transcending nationalistic oriented curricula.⁸³ However, at the turn of century, a political focus on national history in Europe was increasing, while the interest in the European dimension of history decreased due to newly created fears of loss of identity after the opening of the border between East and West.⁸⁴ As Van der Leeuw-Roord put it: ‘In 2001 national pride and pain is still reflected in the history education of most European countries. In most curricula and textbooks, events of national suffering take up most space, followed by moments of glory in the nation’s past’.⁸⁵ In contrast to Van der Leeuw-Roord, Rolf Wittenbrock, claims that nationalistic subjects in history education are, in the majority of European countries, declining whereas those with a European and global focus are increasing.⁸⁶ As has already been argued, one cannot agree with Wittenbrock because European unification and globalization bring along processes quite opposite to those one would expect. These include, for instance, strengthening of national feelings due to the fear of the loss of identity. This claim can be supported by the argument of Martin Roberts that the fragmentation of communism in Europe had immense implications for education in Europe.⁸⁷ The newly created states ‘establish themselves as nations’ and through history education, which is ‘obviously a school subject which can contribute most to creating in young people the awareness of national identities’, they strengthen nationalistic sentiments.⁸⁸ It can be argued that these triggered the wave of nationalistic revival throughout Europe caused by above mentioned fears and protectionism of identities. Wittenbrock himself claims that ‘a greater number of people in Europe [...] are convinced that national history must keep a central position in school teaching because the nation state was, is and will remain the principal actor in most domains of life in greater communities’.⁸⁹ His illegitimate claim that nationalistic subjects are decreasing may thus

82 Van der Leeuw-Roord, ‘Beyond the Nation: Trans-national Textbooks’.

83 Idem, 1.

84 Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, *History Changes: Facts and Figures about History Education in Europe since 1989* (Den Haag 2003) 19-20.

85 Van der Leeuw-Roord, ‘Europe in the Learning and Teaching of History’, 18.

86 Wittenbrock, ‘European Experiences of Writing Common History Textbooks’, 6.

87 Martin Roberts, ‘The origins of Euroclio – one perspective’, in Roberts (ed.) *After the Wall*, 322.

88 Idem, 322.

89 Wittenbrock, ‘European Experiences of Writing Common History Textbooks’, 2.

be rooted in his participation in the Franco-German history textbook project and the ideas of transcending the national histories which the project entails. In other words, Wittenbrock can be perceived as a true representative of the French-German history project, wishfully thinking of the initiative as of the great change in European history education.

An argument shared by Van der Leeuw-Roord and Wittenbrock is that history education needs a 'political sponsorship' to grasp the concept of Europe and make the states give up their claim that it is inevitable to strengthen and respect national history.⁹⁰ To explain, in many European countries national history has seen its revival in history education, as well as historical narrative. A popular opinion is that there is not enough attention paid to national history when it is indeed national history that should be the most emphasized and made sure not to be forgotten in the time of mass integration of people of one nation into another nation.

One can support the above stated shared claim of Van der Leeuw-Roord and Wittenbrock, as the role of politics in the creation of a supra-national identity is immense. Similarly, it has been very significant in the creation of national identities. However, the European Union does not have much competence in the cultural affairs of countries and it can more or less only promote a European identity. The real power is in the hands of national governments and thus any political support could hardly avoid the propagation of national aims. As Alix Kroeger for BBC News commented on a call of German Minister of Education, Annette Schavan, for a common European history textbook: 'the EU has very limited powers in the field of education; the final say rests with national governments'.⁹¹ Of course the support of a European dimension in history education by national governments would be a big step forward in the creation of a European identity but in the present air of strengthened national sentiments it is also a highly unlikely one. Moreover, there are other, quite original opinions, such as the one of a rather controversial historian in the issues such as nationalism and multiculturalism, David Starkey, who commented to the BBC that 'what made Europe exciting were its differences, even though these had contributed to conflict, and the proposed book would seek to brush those differences away'.⁹² Do these differences need to be 'brushed away' in order to promote European unity? One could argue that it would not be necessary if national identities ceased to foster the divisive sentiments throughout Europe.

90 Van der Leeuw-Roord, 'Europe in the Learning and Teaching of History', 12-14.

91 Alix Kroeger, 'Germany seeks joint history book'.

92 Idem.

2.4.2 The pro-nationalist side and its opponents

The other side of the spectrum on nationalism in history education is represented by its defenders. Nicholas Tate does not share the opinion about the need for the overcoming of centric oriented, nationalistic history education. Tate's claim that belongingness to a nation was in principle a good thing and nationalism is thus a defensible notion, is not as difficult to accept as his claim that it is, in fact, a national identity that is the most important in the life of a person and should be promoted above all other identities.⁹³ His view of national identity as a defensible notion can thus be compared to the beliefs of the previously discussed political theorist David Miller. According to Tate, ethnic determination of the successor states of the Soviet Union, globalization, the US influence, the expansion of the EU, sub-nationalism, migration and post-modern beliefs that there are no objective values and a person is a maker of his or her own life, endanger national identity. In this he sees a reason to promote its fostering through history education, as one of the branches of formal education. It is, however, also perceivable from a quite opposite point of view. At this moment it is national sovereignty and national identity endangering the progress in European unification. European countries fear the loss of their sovereignty, as belonging to the European Union requires ceding of certain aspects of country's existence, such as monetary policy and to a certain degree trade and agriculture policies, under European authority. Moreover, in the globalizing world, characterized by a search for identity, national identities (often with an ethnical tinge) may cause a greater division and endanger peace. Tate's belief that strengthened national identities would elevate the traditions of the majority, and at the same time actively support the maintenance of minority cultures is very nice but rather utopian.⁹⁴ The reason has to be searched in the fact that the existence of minority cultures within a majority have always resulted in strengthening of the divisive feelings between 'us' - 'them' and efforts of the majority to annex the minority, or efforts of the minority to gain independence from the majority.

In opposition to Tate's beliefs stands Maria Grever with her claim that diffusion of national canon will first of all, 'continue enculturation of non-Western migrants and bring about social cohesion'.⁹⁵ It can be argued that the claim of Maria Grever is very legitimate, because the fear of loss of identity results in the strengthening of national consciousness through history education and history narration which results in highlighting the lines of division between countrymen and immigrants. These problems, according to Grever, in concordance with Van der Leeuw-Roord and Wittenbrock, need to be dealt with by governments, seeking to increase their

93 Nicholas Tate, 'History and National Identity', 34.

94 Idem, 34.

95 Grever, 'Plurality, Narrative and the Historical Canon', 34.

control of history education.⁹⁶ A very interesting and convincing point that Grever makes, though, is that it is not politicians but academic historians and history teachers that call for an emphasis on national history, advocating it by claiming that children know too little about national history.⁹⁷ This can be considered a true and valuable contribution to the discussion on history education versus nationalism, because textbooks and governments could both promote a common European view but if teachers were to continue propagating the nationalistic view, no positive change can be expected.

Tradition, routines and a certain amount of ‘our’ is necessary for the maintaining of historical consciousness and identity, as Grever further very convincingly argues.⁹⁸ However, it is equally legitimate to claim that the imposing of a state-sponsored ideological canon – which would suit the political propaganda but not a true non-beneficiary identity – creates a danger of loss of identity.⁹⁹ As Grever puts it: ‘If we stick to traditional nation history teaching for political or moral reasons, ignoring the constructed character of nations, history education will become disconnected from the scientific practice of history and its results. What remains of history will be an ideological phantom’.¹⁰⁰

2.5 Conclusion

To sum up the previously discussed theories, claims and opinions, one has to start with an up to date and adequate working theory of nationalism for the purpose of this research project. Nationalism can be defined as a historical and ideological movement, a combination of spiritual and political principles. Its role is to create an identity and thus maintain unity and autonomy through common myths and memories, language and traditions, but also territory, economy, public culture, rights and responsibilities for all members of a nation. As the previous discussion aimed to show, important is that both spiritual and political, or subjective and objective, elements are necessary and self-influencing.

Nationalistic discourse can be seen, as Palti argued, as a cycle in which an objective entity – the nation – serves as a framework of members’ identity. This framework, with its political function, aims at influencing the subjective choices of members of a nation. These are in fact the nation’s creators, as a community cannot exist without its people. Nationalistic discourse thus, with all its means of imposing of national identity, chains people to a particular nation. It

96 Grever, ‘Plurality, Narrative and the Historical Canon’, 33.

97 Idem, 34.

98 Idem, 43.

99 Idem, 43.

100 Idem, 44.

can be argued that the performative moment of such discourse seeks to create a narrative of the community that will foster nationalistic sentiments. An important part of this narrative is, as Hobsbawm, Phillips and Dawisha claim, the history of a nation. As concluded through their theories and the theories of other discussed scholars, history of a nation is interpreted, adapted and even invented through history narratives and history education abused and used for nationalistic aims.

The argument of Dawisha about history used as political instrument, manipulated for national aims, creates an effective base for the debate of role of history education for nationalistic aims. As Dawisha put it, the nation-states have interfered with history education since its development in the nineteenth century. Probably surprisingly, in spite of the globalizing and uniting trends in Europe, not much has changed in the twenty-first century. As Van der Leeuw-Roord argues, the national focus in history education is still overwhelming. One can agree with Maria Grever that the continued fostering of national canons will only deepen the differences and hostility to minorities within nations, not to mention ensure that European political unity will remain an empty phrase.

How has thus history education really changed since the 1950s? Have the efforts to change history education succeeded in overcoming the nationalistic dimension, or are nationalism and forms of political propaganda comfortably rooted even in the projects that claim to have overcome it? Further debate will discuss the possibility, or impossibility, of diminishing the strength of nationalism in history education, and the building of a common European history on a base created by warfare and division. It will research if Renan's 'forgetting' of the unpleasant divisive past and fostering a supra-national identity through history education can become a twenty-first century reality.

Chapter 3 Europe, history and ‘the age of nationalism’

‘National pride is absurd, ridiculous and dangerous; but it is everyone’s duty to love his country and it cannot be loved if it is despised and allowed to be disparaged; it must be defended and each of us must contribute the utmost in his power to its honor and its welfare.’

‘Devotion to the fatherland is a great human virtue. He that has lost his patriotic spirit has lost himself and the whole world about himself.’

J. G. Herder¹⁰¹

Many scholars of nationalism agree that the concept can be traced to the period prior to the eighteenth century. As an example let one consider a slightly poetic claim of Hans Kohn in which he suggests that nationalism experienced its ‘dawn, the early, flickering still uncertain lights preceding the day’ prior to the French Revolution.¹⁰² Despite the claims about the roots of nationalism growing deeper than the French Revolution, scholars also agree that the modern concept of nationalism does date to 1789, when the French Revolution brought enlightenment to the lives of Europeans. ‘Although the French Revolution may not have been the beginning of all forms of European nationalism, it certainly influenced all of them greatly’, claims Otto Dann, a German historian and scholar of European nationalism, who has since the late 1980s been active as a professor of Modern History at the University of Cologne.¹⁰³ His assertions remain important and interesting today as he looks at the French Revolution and the way it influenced other European countries on the way to nationalistic Europe in the late eighteenth century.

When discussing the nationalism of eighteenth century, one has to bear in mind the difference in concepts and vocabulary.¹⁰⁴ As discussed in the previous section, nowadays nationalism is understood as a political and ideological program, a combination of spiritual and political principle for attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity and identity.¹⁰⁵ In the eighteenth century, on the other hand, the term ‘nationalism’ was hardly used at all. ‘Generally the term was used in pejorative sense to denote an exaggerated pride in one’s own nation, an intolerant prejudice, similar to our term ‘chauvinism’.¹⁰⁶ A ‘good’ term to describe national

101 As quoted in: Robert Reinhold Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 113 and 124.

102 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, VIII.

103 Dann and Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, 1.

104 Idem, 1-11.

105 Phillips, ‘Reflections on history, nationhood and schooling’, 40.

106 Dann and Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, 3.

feeling or forms of national thinking was 'patriotism'. This term was used in the eighteenth century society in direct contrast to 'nationalism'. As Dann puts it: 'Patriots were those who loved their country so much that they were always willing to value it above other countries, to work for its welfare, and to defend it in the time of war'.¹⁰⁷

Even if one accepts the premise that nationalism is a modern age phenomenon and considers the eighteenth century as a time of its development, it needs to be acknowledged that nationalism, in its modern form, did not suddenly appear without any forces previously shaping the basis of its development. Moreover, it was due to these forces that nationalism developed in the form that one knows it from modern history.

First of all, there was the process of nation-building. At first the highest social groups - the nobility and the clergy - sharing the language and other social links, created a new form of shared identity, national consciousness, to reach their aims. In the course of time, educated laymen and other social groups followed suit. In the process of nation-building, national ideology, with its stereotypes and prejudices, played an important role. In connection with the development of national ideologies, the process of modern state-building is of particular importance.¹⁰⁸ As previously discussed, the population had to be turned into a common body - a nation - and the claims and political actions of government needed justification. As Dann supports the argument: 'The government could invoke the nation in its political argument and propaganda, and the promotion of a sense of national identity became a major concern of the state'.¹⁰⁹

The process of modern state building was usually led by the king, while nobles and citizens played subordinate parts. However, soon these groups started demanding their participation in state matters. Numerous struggles for state reforms broke out and can nowadays be seen as greatly influential for the history of number of European states since the seventeenth century. The patriotic character of these struggles grew more nationalistic in the course of eighteenth century.¹¹⁰ The educated middle class formulated a new form of patriotism, including the non-privileged classes in the nation. The main aim of the 'patriots' was a reformed fatherland, welfare for citizens and diminishing of the importance of class-interests. As Dann claims:

'In eighteenth century Europe some societies and social classes went a step further in their struggle for participation. [...] They desired full political sovereignty and

107 Dann and Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, 3.

108 Idem, 3-6.

109 Idem, 6.

110 Idem, 6-7.

autonomy for the whole nation. The concept of patriotism has thus developed into nationalism, which in the prevailing circumstances was a revolutionary programme'.¹¹¹

The term 'nation' was defined in a new way. A democratic nation was, and still is, based on the principle of sovereignty of its people and human rights. It was thus anti-monarchial and anti-aristocratic and involved a break with the *ancien régime*.¹¹²

Otto Dann makes a claim that 'the creation of a new democratic nation is an act that each society can only achieve by and for itself'.¹¹³ In the second half of the eighteenth century, however, there were two societies that were the pioneers in this respect. The revolutionary experiences of the United States and France provided important impulses for national movements elsewhere. The French Revolution was naturally more influential for the development of nationalism within Europe. Considering its effects, one can distinguish between those national movements that received positive stimulus from the French example, and those which arose in opposition to French power and expansionism.

3.1 The French nation – 'one and indivisible'

Circumstances and influences in European countries during the eighteenth century varied and due to this fact there were many different ways in which modern nations were created. However, according to Otto Dann, two different general tendencies can be discerned. These are important to discuss as they represent the two different ways in which French and German nation developed.

France represents a model where a nation-state had already existed during the *ancien régime*. The crucial matter was the problem of its sovereignty.¹¹⁴ In France, a nation had to conquer the existing state and defeat absolute monarchy, diminish the power of aristocracy and feudalism. As Kohn supports the argument:

'The sovereignty of the prince who had been one was to be replaced by the sovereignty of the people, who had to become one in a higher sense of the word. Nationalism was to provide the integrating force of the new era which dawned over France; and through France over western mankind'.¹¹⁵

One can argue that France existed as a nation long before the Revolution. However, it was not until 1770s that the terms 'state' and 'nation' were frequently used, as claimed by Jacques

111 Dann and Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, 8.

112 Idem, 8-9.

113 Idem, 9.

114 Idem, 9.

115 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 237.

Godechot, a French historian and a scholar of French Revolution.¹¹⁶ Prior to the sixteenth century, France did not really exist as a unified state. Its unification began under Louis XI, with the progressive weakening of the aristocratic houses. The process culminated in the beginning of the seventeenth century in Henry IV's creation of a 'strong, unified French state that accepted monarchical authority and was well on the way to healing the [...] wounds of the French religious wars' – as Dawisha puts it.¹¹⁷ The French state was strengthened throughout the seventeenth century by Louis XIII and Louis XIV. It is thus of no surprise that the French nation has been constructed by the state. In the time of Rousseau, the two terms were used interchangeably, as one can derive from Jacques Godechot's essay.¹¹⁸ What is more, as Godechot claims: 'In 1789, the word *nation* became the favorite word of the revolutionary generation'.¹¹⁹ Due to bad living and social conditions, as well as the ideals of the enlightenment and Rousseau's ideas of solidarity and equal rights, the liberal political groups used the claim to national liberties as a means to reform the fatherland and include the lower classes in the nation. Therefore it was from 1789 that the term 'nation' acquired a meaning presented by Ernest Renan in his lecture *What is a Nation?*. Nation as a spiritual principle was a good mean to unify the nation which constituted of provinces characterized by their particularities. In the Constitution from 1791 one can read:

'The Kingdom is one and indivisible, its territory is partitioned into eighty three departments'.¹²⁰

And further it asserts:

'Sovereignty is single, indivisible, inalienable and imprescriptible. It belongs to the Nation'.¹²¹

After the nation solved the internal ruptures between federalists and unitarists and brought the principles of 1789 to Belgium, territories on the left bank of the Rhine and the United Provinces, it became a model nation.¹²² The French nation thus appeared to be a nation carrying a torch and illuminating the path of other nations to liberty. However, one could stress the word 'appeared'. The originally honorable ideals of the revolution of man were overshadowed by Napoleon's interest in territorial power. When he became the First Consul and then Emperor, his annexations

116 Jacques Godechot, 'The New Concept of the Nation and its Diffusion in Europe', in: Dann and Dinwiddy, *Nationalism in the Age of the French Revolution*, 13-26.

117 Dawisha, 'Nation and Nationalism', 12.

118 Godechot, 'The New Concept of the Nation and its Diffusion in Europe', 13-26.

119, Idem, 14.

120 As quoted in: Godechot, 'The New Concept of the Nation and its Diffusion in Europe', 17

121 Idem, 17.

122 Godechot, 'The New Concept of the Nation and its Diffusion in Europe', 17-18.

without the consent of the people of annexed nations violated the ideals of the French Revolution, as he utterly disregarded their freedom and equality, represented by the right to dispose of themselves.¹²³ By provoking discontent in the stricken countries, Napoleon generated nationalism hostile to France.

3.2 German nationalism

In Germany the basis for a nation-state did not exist. The conditions for the creation of a modern nation were thus completely different than those in France. ‘German nationalism emerged out of a crisis of values’, claims Harold James.¹²⁴

As one can learn from the in-depth book on German nationalism by Robert Reinhold Ergang, in the sixteenth century German nationalism saw its first chance to develop through the writings of Martin Luther which, even though not being of a nationalistic nature, appealed to the German national sentiments.¹²⁵ However, the opposite happened when the religious movement dismembered Germany and divided it into several religious camps. It can be argued that the Thirty Years’ War, in which the mainly religious conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants within the Habsburg Empire developed into the war involving most of the European powers, finished what the Reformation initiated. It completed the territorial and religious dismemberment which was officially approved by the peace treaties. As Ergang claims, Germany comprised approximately eighteen hundred separate territories, each of which was of a different size, had a different form of government and was ruled by its ‘own’ sovereign.¹²⁶ The Holy Roman Empire was a sinking ship as it was now shattered to pieces; and the German people did not desire to restore its former power. It can be argued that to some of them, opposition to the power of the Habsburgs was a movement in the direction of the freedom from the non-German peoples and that such thoughts carry elements of nationalistic thinking, as opposition of the other is one of the basic premises of nationalism. However, at the same time, one can hardly speak of nationalism in a country so politically and economically divided as seventeenth century Germany.

Moreover, with the decline of the empire, the Latin language was declining too, and it was not giving a way to German but to French language. In the eighteenth century, the German nobility, as well as literature, made use of the French language, while the German language was, as Ergang puts it, ‘relegated to the common people and its use considered vulgar’.¹²⁷ Also in

123 Godechot, ‘The New Concept of the Nation and its Diffusion in Europe’, 26.

124 Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990*, 34.

125 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 11.

126 Idem, 13.

127 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 20.

many of the common schools the study of foreign languages was given preference over the study of German language. If one takes into consideration the discussed importance of language and education for nation-building, it is clear that in Germany the conditions for the development of national consciousness were not ideal.

Furthermore, the eighteenth century in Germany can be considered as an era of copying mostly French, but also Italian, Spanish, English and Greek models. All spheres of life were affected by French influence. Language, architecture, art, riding techniques, kitchen, education, dancing or clothing, everything was good as soon as it came from France or was influenced by France.¹²⁸ Another cause of German reluctance to the cause of unity was a sharp class division. Everything, however, has two sides and so did German nationalistic feelings in the eighteenth century. There were individuals and societies who saw a danger of Germany being conquered by foreign nations and tried to awaken interest in German culture and language.¹²⁹ However, according to Ergang, not much changed and patriotism did not arise among the Germans until the end of the eighteenth century. ‘*We no longer have a fatherland*’, was the slogan of the day’ according to the *Teutsche Merkur* of June, 1786.¹³⁰ Germans appeared to be more cosmopolitan than patriotic. Ergang quotes very convincing words of Friedrich Schiller who felt that it was ‘a miserably small ideal to write for one nationality’, as he considered himself to be a citizen of the world and not of only one nation.¹³¹

One of the speakers in favor of national sentiments in Germany was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, a German philosopher and mathematician, who always put the interests of Germany as a whole on the first place and strived for awakening of the German spirit.¹³² Leibniz viewed with alarm the ambitious policies of King Louis XIV and saw the solution in forming of a league of Rhine among the princes of Germany and not involving any foreign forces. His plans, however, were declined by Louis XIV. Leibniz also opposed the blind imitating and admiring of the French and encouraged his countrymen to stop following other nationalities and lead them instead.¹³³ Another impulse to awake a national spirit came from the rise of Pietism and Rationalism towards the end of seventeenth century.¹³⁴ Pietism contributed to lessening the differences between

128 James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990*, 38-41 and Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 20-27.

129 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 28-50.

130 As quoted in: Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 29.

131 Idem, 32.

132 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 35-40.

133 Idem, 38.

134 Pietism was a seventeenth and eighteenth century movement within Lutheranism emphasizing individual piety and a vigorous religious life based on love and godliness. Rationalism emphasized the reason as accountable for the origin of ideas, as opposed to

religions less severe by preaching love a godliness becoming the main principles of all religions without difference. According to Ergang: ‘Rationalism did much to wipe out the outstanding differences between the Catholics, the Jews and the Protestants which barred the path to the rise of a national feeling and of a national culture’.¹³⁵ His claim is legitimate as Rationalism did not put emphasis on religion but rather reason as a source of knowledge and justification.

In the second half of the eighteenth century another ‘prophet’ of German nationalism appeared and brought changes. A writer, journalist and politician, Friedrich Karl von Moser included in the term ‘nation’ all the citizens of the Holy Roman Empire and ‘scorned the political conditions in the small states, the moral laxity at the courts, the favoritism of the princes, their senseless squandering of the money of their subjects, in general, their abuse of the power which they wielded over their subjects’.¹³⁶ Moser believed that the German people had to unite for ‘their common welfare’ and cultivate ‘a true and common German national interest’.¹³⁷

The eighteenth century was a time of critique of existing conditions and imitation of foreign cultures, especially French, and a broad call for distinguishing the German characteristics and enhancing the interest in German native language, national history, literature, customs and traditions. Another propagator of German nationalism who commiserated the lack of national sentiment among the German people was Justus Möser, a German lawyer, statesman, scholar and historian, who saw the reason for the weakness of Germany in the indifference of the Germans about one another.¹³⁸ Möser, however, expressed assertions and sentiments that had already been expressed by Herder.

It is Ergang’s belief that the above mentioned scholars were ‘but forerunners who helped to clear the field of dense growths so that Herder could sow upon in the seeds of a national culture’¹³⁹. Ergang argues that the main importance of Herder not only lies in the fact that he opposed foreign influence or that he urged the German people to develop a national culture but in the fact that he explained to them why they should do so: ‘In short, it can be said that Herder formulated, in its broader outlines, a philosophy of nationalism’.¹⁴⁰

systems that were primarily based on traditional knowledge or systems empiricist in nature. In other words, rationalists came to believe that the world is built beyond human concepts and based on logic and geometry.

135 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 40.

136 Idem, 41.

137 As quoted in: Immanuel Rosenstein, ‘Friedrich Karl von Moser’, in: *Preussische Jahrbücher*, vol.XV (1865), 229-58, in: Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 43.

138 Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*, 46-50.

139 Idem, 49.

140 Idem, 50.

Ergang's assertions are supported by Hans Kohn. As he claims, Herder can be regarded as 'the first representative of German nationalism and of folk nationalism generally', 'influenced by Rousseau's stress upon the primitive and pre-civilized stages of human development, the natural folkdom of 'unspoiled' peoples'.¹⁴¹ However, according to Kohn, Herder had no political will – as he promoted his idea of *Volk* through the folk cultural creativeness and inspiration, in the form of writings, songs, manufactures and institutions – and thus his ideas alone did not have efficient power to establish a German nation. Only after 1806, when the empire was completely dissolved, 'was the cultural concept of the folk politicized, and the uniqueness of the folk proclaimed as an aggressive factor in the struggle against Western society and civilization', as Kohn puts it.¹⁴²

The last and determining element in the development of German nationalism was thus Napoleon and his ambitions for conquest. One can therefore say that it developed as a response to the French nationalism and its conquering character. This arose, as previously discussed, due to the failure of the revolution of the rights of men.

The war of liberation of Prussia from France in 1814 was an example of hostility to France and Prussian patriotism. However, the leaders of the war saw themselves as the knights of the Holy Roman Empire and fought for Germany, not only a part of it:

'I am sorry that Your Excellency presumes a Prussian in me and finds a Hanoverian in Himself. I have only one fatherland, and that is Germany, and since according to the old constitution [of the Holy Roman Empire] I belong only to Germany and to no particular part, I am devoted with all my heart only to that whole and not the parts. Dynasties at this moment leave me untouched, they are only instruments. My wish is to see Germany great and strong, in order to assert her role between France and Russia and to regain her autonomy, independence and nationality'. – Heinrich Friedrich Karl Reichsfreiherr vom und zu Stein, 1814¹⁴³

According to James, the war of liberation laid the foundation for a myth: 'Germany, guided by far-sighted statesmen, fought a war in which all social classes participated'.¹⁴⁴ It was a united Germany, not the separate territorial states of Prussia and Austria that won the war. The true national spirit in Germany was on the rise and the day of the Battle of Leipzig, which marked the

141 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 352.

142 Idem, 352.

143 Speech of Heinrich Friedrich Karl Reichsfreiherr vom und zu Stein [Prussian officer, statesman and reformer] to Count Ernst Friedrich Herbert zu Münster [German statesman, politician and minister in the service of House of Hanover], in : Rudolf Ibek ken, *Preussen 1807 – 1813: Staat und Volk als Idee und in Wirklichkeit* (Cologne 1970) 371.

144 James, *A German Identity*, 37.

total defeat of Napoleon in Germany, became a day of celebration for nationalists of nineteenth century Germany.

3.3 Education in nineteenth century Germany

After 1815 German nationalism survived as an opposition to the new principle of international order which relied on dynastic legacy and denial of the principle of nationality. As James puts it: ‘At this stage German ‘nationalism’ (rather than the more widespread xenophobia and hatred of the French) is better described as a national awakening that took place among a relatively limited culture class’.¹⁴⁵ The importance of language and history, which had been propagated by scholars since the sixteenth century, grew in strength. Since the eighteenth century, Herder preached that language and history are not an invention of one man but ‘required transmission through generations by means of education or a more general acculturation: ‘I came to the world and was subjected to instructions by my family: and so was my father, and so was the first son of the first father of the tribe’.¹⁴⁶ Through language, national myths about the deeds of forefathers were developed and national consciousness emerged based on long historical continuities. However, history itself did not suffice to construct nationality. A nation needs a confrontation with ‘the other’ – other groups, nations – to create its own identity by comparison, challenge, need for development and by realizing what it is not but what it could become. As, in James’ claim, one can deduce from Herder’s writings, there is no universal picture of how a country should ‘be’.¹⁴⁷ Every country is special and has different qualities because each has its own history. James claims that Herder’s main asset for the nineteenth century nationalists was the emphasis he put on education and culture.¹⁴⁸ For Herder these were the distinguishing elements of a nation, as through education Germany’s own history could be passed on without imitating other nations. Germany had to accentuate its uniqueness and make its ‘imprint on the ages’.¹⁴⁹ Identification of a nation with culture required involving of new social groups. The reason is the integration of large numbers of ‘ordinary people’ to the nation and making the use of the folk heritage they disposed of. The penetration of education into linguistics and history meant a continual strengthening of national sentiments because, as discussed in the second chapter of this research project, often invented national history narrated in the language of the people is one of the major elements creating a national identity. Education available to all the people of a nation would thus

145 James, *A German Identity*, 38.

146 Bernhard Ludwig Suphan (ed.), *Herders Sämtliche Schriften* (Berlin 1877-1913) 135-136, in: James, *A German Identity*, 38.

147 James, *A German Identity*, 39.

148 Idem, 42.

149 Idem, 40.

have revolutionary consequences.¹⁵⁰ Herder indeed argued in favor of its availability to wide range of social groups.

Another German philosopher, admirer of Immanuel Kant and founding father of German nationalism, Johan Gottlieb Fichte, was also, in James' words, 'obsessed by education'.¹⁵¹ In his *Addresses to the German Nation* the main focus lies in stressing that a state-directed education could create a German character.

'We must, to put it in one word, find character: for to have character and to be German is without doubt the same thing'.¹⁵²

According to Fichte:

'The majority of citizens must be educated in [a] patriotic way; and, in order to make sure of this majority, the education should be tried on everyone. Before, the majority of the population just lived for the flesh for matter, for nature; the new education will ensure that the spirit alone lives in and guides the majority, and indeed soon the whole population'.¹⁵³

Education was the answer to the question how to awaken a national consciousness and create national identity. It could make citizens. Alongside education, it was art and newly built public monuments that expressed German nationality. Much as in the beginning of eighteenth century French influence was palpable in every aspect of life; in the nineteenth century the effort to oppose and replace everything French took the lead. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, German nationalism started growing in strength.

3.4 Nationalism in French education

The pillar of French nationalism and main preacher of the importance of education was Jean Jacques Rousseau. To Rousseau:

'It is the role of education to shape souls of the citizens in a national pattern and so to direct their opinions, their likes, and dislikes that they shall be patriotic by inclination, passionately, of necessity. The newly-born infant, upon first opening his eyes, must gaze upon the fatherland, and until his dying day should behold nothing else'.¹⁵⁴

150 James, *A German Identity*, 42.

151 Idem, 42.

152 Johan Gottlieb Fichte, *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (Munich 1808), 120 and 171, in: James, *A German Nation*, 43.

153 Fichte, *Reden an die deutsche Nation*, 153, in: James, *A German Nation*, 43.

154 As quoted in: Dawisha, *Nation and Nationalism*, 19.

From childhood the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, ‘in the service of the common fatherland’¹⁵⁵, as Kohn puts it, were to be fostered in the hearts of the citizens. According to Rousseau, through education, each person should conceive that he or she is not an individual element but a member of a nation.

The French Revolution put the ideas of Rousseau into practice. As Dawisha puts it in two following quotes, education was since the time of the French Revolution of a crucial importance for creating a bond between the people and a nation:

‘The leaders of the French Revolution recognized from the very beginning the pivotal role education would play in uniting the people and the ‘fatherland’. A comprehensive system of education, the first of its kind in Europe, was instituted to create a patriotic citizenry, to turn ‘peasants into citizens’’.¹⁵⁶

‘The teaching of patriotic history replaced the classics. The arts, especially music, were geared to arousing national pride and passion. Schools adopted an aggressive language curriculum where French was taught as the only national language at the expense of the native idioms formerly taught among Basques, Bretons, Alsatians, Catalans, Flemish, and Provenceaux. Higher education received the same treatment, where Latin and classical authors gave way to French and French writers.’¹⁵⁷

155 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 243.

156 Dawisha, *Nation and Nationalism*, 19.

157 Idem, 19.

Chapter 4 Franco-German relations

Extensive studies were and yet could be written on Franco-German relations throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century due to their complexity, unstableness and international importance. For the purpose of this thesis it is necessary to provide at least a short overview of the development of these relations, as well as overview of the impulses and reasons for the direction of their development. The overview will point out the exceptionality of the bilateral relations, as well as the miraculous reconciliation at the end of the twentieth century and the uniqueness of the rapprochement in history education which followed more than a century-long ‘hereditary enmity’ of the two nations.

4.1 From Napoleon to the First World War

The Franco-German enmity can be traced far back in history – precisely, to the emergence of national consciousness and of modern nationalism in France, followed by the emergence of national sentiments in Germany. ‘The formation of both nation-states throughout the nineteenth century occurred largely as a conflictive and interactive process in which images and perceptions of the other served to buttress national sentiments’.¹⁵⁸ These well-chosen words of Carine Germond and Henning Türk, French and German historians and editors of a recently published book, *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe*, reviewing the most current research and dissecting in detail the Franco-German relations, serve as a very good introduction to the history of Franco-German ‘hereditary enmity’.

According to Reiner Marcowitz, director of the Centre of German Studies and co-director of the Department of Franco-German Relations at the Paul Verlain Universtiy, Metz, the relations between the two nations are a key theme in historical writing of both, with the period between 1789 and 1919 being of special importance.¹⁵⁹ As already discussed, one can claim that this enmity has its beginning in the French Revolution of 1789 as it can be considered an impulse for creating a national consciousness in both nations. In France it was a leadership and missionary impulse, followed by expansive ambitions; in Germany it was an impulse to stand up against the Napoleonic occupation which resulted from these ambitions in the aftermath of the French Revolution. One can thus only agree with Marcowitz that it was not the ‘Franco-Prussian War of

158 Carine Germond and Henning Türk, ‘Old Foes and New Friends. Historical Perspectives on Franco-German Relations since Napoleon’, in: Carine Germond and Henning Türk (eds.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe. From “Hereditary Enemies” to Partners* (New York and Hampshire 2008) 2.

159 Reiner Marcowitz, ‘Attraction and Repulsion. Franco-German Relations in the “Long Nineteenth Century”’, in: Carine Germond and Henning Türk (eds.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe. From “Hereditary Enemies” to Partners* (New York and Hampshire 2008) 13.

1870-71 that first signaled new developments in the bilateral relations but rather the much earlier wars of liberation of 1813-15. For the first time, traditional power-political rivalry and the age-old territorial conflicts of earlier centuries were combined with national passion'.¹⁶⁰ At first, the German young intellectuals and commoners welcomed the 'mission' of France to bestow equality, freedom and brotherhood, as the dualism between Austrian Habsburg Monarchy and the Kingdom of Prussia was dominant in the German lands. However, as Marcowitz claims, 'under Napoleon I, the French mission became a fig leaf for a barely disguised expansionism against which a significant German resistance soon coalesced'.¹⁶¹ As discussed, the opposition to France led to the intensification of German nationalism as the German people had risen up against the French occupation.

After Napoleon was defeated, France had to keep a low profile, especially because of its domestic instability and international isolation. In 1830 France once again gained sympathies on the international scene with its second attempt to restore the ideals of 1789 and by driving Charles X, a ruler hated amongst the public, from the throne. Many Germans thus saw France as a progressive, revolutionary and self-determining country, serving as an example. However, this positive image of France had its flaws. The supporters of German unification saw, as usually, France as a potential aggressor seeking to annex the left bank of the Rhine. In 1840, the 'Rhine crisis' broke out with France's demands for pushing the national boundary to the Rhine. The old fears of Germany were thus awakened and the stereotype of the aggressive French found its place in history narratives, stories and songs. The image of France as an enemy was thus once again used to foster nationalistic sentiments of the Germans, as well as their national image – as one in opposition to the French 'other'. These images were, according to Marcowitz, passed on as given from generation to generation.¹⁶²

The revolutionary year 1848 brought important changes in bilateral relations. France sought to diminish the concerns caused by its stereotypical image as an aggressor and work with Germany. That meant, however, that the French had to support the German efforts to unification and self-determination, something they were not ready to do as it would mean a loss of power on the French side. What is more, Napoleon III wanted to establish a new system 'based on the national self-determination of peoples, in which France would play a dominant role' and for this aim he needed the support of his neighbors.¹⁶³ The status quo in Prussia needed to be changed in

¹⁶⁰ Marcowitz, 'Attraction and Repulsion', 13.

¹⁶¹ Idem, 14.

¹⁶² Idem, 15.

¹⁶³ Idem, 16.

order for Napoleon to reach his goals. However, due to Prussian suspicion of the French, it was not until the appointment of Otto von Bismarck as prime minister that Prussia created an alliance with France.¹⁶⁴

'Let us put Germany in the saddle. She will know how to ride.' – Otto von Bismarck¹⁶⁵

Bismarck saw this alliance to be in Germany's political interest, as France was interested in elevating Prussia's status, while Austria denied its neighbor equal status in the Confederation. This confederation of thirty eight German-speaking member states was created in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna and characterized by the rivalry between the two largest and the most powerful states – Prussia and Austria – known as German dualism. After a war, unexpectedly declared by Prussia, followed by its victory over Austria, there came the possibility for the victor to implement a 'small German unification' – the creation of North German Confederation, excluding Austria from the confederation's affairs.¹⁶⁶ The population of France did not see the advantages that the exclusion of Austria brought to France and the initial sympathies for the German unification disappeared as most of the French population regarded German unification under Prussian leadership to be a grave danger.

In 1870, the conflict and the tense situation between the two nations escalated after the candidacy of Leopold, Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, for the Spanish throne.¹⁶⁷ The French public blamed Prussia for this initiative, and France demanded that Prussia refused to support the candidacy. The Prussian king refused this demand politely, however his dispatch, changed by Bismarck to a harsh rejection, caused a great outrage in France because of its public humiliation by Prussia. The Franco-Prussian War followed and the conflict soon gained national dimension as the Germans presented themselves as the victims of French aggression and the French claimed to be the defenders of their republic against German expansion. The war conflict ended with the Prussian King gaining the title 'German Kaiser' in the Palace of Versailles. France thus emerged from the war humiliated by the fact that the 'German Kaiser' was proclaimed in Versailles and also furious because of the high reparations they had to pay. The enmity between France and Germany became a defining element of the new era of the German Reich.¹⁶⁸ The War of Liberation, and the German Reich that emerged from them, made the Franco-German

¹⁶⁴ Marcowitz, 'Attraction and Repulsion', 15-17.

¹⁶⁵ As quoted in: Snyder, *Roots of German Nationalism*, 55.

¹⁶⁶ Marcowitz, 'Attraction and Repulsion', 17.

¹⁶⁷ Idem, 18.

¹⁶⁸ Idem, 17-20.

opposition the future of both nations for a very long time and , as Marcowitz claims, transformed it to the notion of ‘hereditary enemies’, which was inherited by many generations to come.¹⁶⁹

The French image of Germany as a land of literature and philosophy was overshadowed by the image of a land of barbarians with the desire to dominate. On the other side, the German fascination with French progressiveness was replaced by a permanent anxiety of aggression and so an image of an unpredictable, deceitful and dangerous enemy. On both sides, the image of the enemy became a constitutive element of the national consciousness that in crisis situations created an ‘oil-on-fire’ situation in which the two nations were unable to find accordance.

One can argue that creation of the ‘French enemy’ by the German leaders was a strategically advantageous step. The new artificial construct of the German Empire needed the people’s support and a strong foundation to stand on. This foundation was provided by the creation of a stereotypical image of ‘the other’ – France – and a common struggle against it, winning new territories and marking them with a ‘label’ of the German Empire.

After these important episodes in Franco-German relations, the two nations would come together in short agreements when the need for alliance against a third party emerged, but the usual antipathy and enmity largely dominated the bilateral relations. In 1882, Germany created a Triple Alliance with Austria-Hungary and Italy to create a mutual support in case of an attack of any remaining super power not included in the alliance. On the eve of the First World War, the position of France was strengthened due to German colonial interest and lessened pressure to keep control over the issues on the continent. Moreover, the German aspirations to become a world power were greatly disliked not only by France but also Britain and Russia. The three countries created a Triple Entente putting Germany in the opposition. Germany contributed to this hostile environment by its newly gained self-overestimation and arrogant claim of being something special and thus claiming a special position and rights among the great powers.¹⁷⁰

The First World War can be seen as another particle in the chain in Franco-German relations. A murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, by a Bosnian-Serb student triggered a month of diplomatic maneuvering which ended in the war involving not only Europe, but, due to colonial expansion of the previous centuries, the entire globe. After Serbia refused to fulfill all the demands placed on it by Austria-Hungary, it found itself in a war declared by Austria-Hungary in July 1914. The second to get involved in the war was Russia, supporting its longtime protégé and aiming at preclusion of elimination of its influence in the Balkans by Austria-Hungary. At this point, it can be argued, Germany and France

¹⁶⁹ Marcowitz, ‘Attraction and Repulsion’, 19.

¹⁷⁰ Idem, 20-22.

should have initiated common effort at crisis diplomacy given the alliance of one with Austria and the other with Russia.¹⁷¹ However, Germany concentrated on mobilizing and demanded neutrality of France in the event of war against Russia. The unclear and elusive answer of the French made Germany declare a war on France. Given the situation and relations between the two countries, one could also claim that the vague answer of the French served as a provocation and, subsequently, an opportunity for Germany to declare war. In any case, the Germans had to bear the role of aggressor in the Great War.

Both the Germans and the French realized early in the war that ‘the extent of the victory had to correspond to the greatness of the sacrifice if they wanted to remain in power’, as Marcowitz claims.¹⁷² This can be explained by both countries being well aware of the certainty of the loss of power and authority, and waves of protest and dissatisfaction on the side of their citizens, as well as citizens of allied nations, in case of defeat. Too many people died fighting for both sides to be able to afford a defeat or an insignificant victory. During the war the images of each other worsened on both sides, however, mainly on the French side resulting in harsh reparation demands which can be seen as a French revenge for 1871. Germany was humiliated by signing a peace treaty in Versailles, the same as French almost half century ago and equally was obliged to pay high reparations. The terms of the treaty, however, turned out to be insufficient to weaken Germany in the long term but were indeed sufficient to cause ultimate harm to Franco-German relations in the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁷³ The image of the French as despotic victors had been carved in the German minds.

4.2 The Inter-War Period and the Second World War

‘Hardly a period in Franco-German relations was as dramatic as that which ran from the end of World War I to the surrender of Nazi Germany on May 8, 1945’, claims French historian and current director of the *Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Strasbourg*, Sylvain Schirmann.¹⁷⁴ Both countries were partly responsible for the First World War and their relations stood in the centre of European issues in the interwar period. Germany found itself in the strained position caused by the reparations, lost territories, disarmament, demilitarization and economic liabilities of

171 Marcowitz, ‘Attraction and Repulsion’, 22.

172 Idem, 23.

173 Idem, 22-24.

174 Sylvain Schirmann, ‘Franco-German Relations, 1918-45’, in: Carine Germond and Henning Türk (ed.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe. From “Hereditary Enemies” to Partners* (New York and Hampshire 2008) 75.

Versailles. What is more, the Versailles Treaty designated Germany as the only culprit of instigating hostilities. France was thus the moral victor.¹⁷⁵

In 1922 Germany missed the deadline for payment and France, with the assistance of Belgium and Italy, took the opportunity to seize the industrial Ruhr area.¹⁷⁶ France aimed at cutting Germany off from both Rhine and Ruhr regions which were the richest in resources and industrial production. The path to rapprochement was opened in 1924 thanks to a new German Chancellor, Gustav Stresemann, who encouraged his countrymen not to resist and negotiate; and the Dawes Plan – a plan for collecting war reparations from Germany – which fulfilled the expectations of both France and Germany. France would obtain its reparations – as a loan was awarded to Germany, with the USA furnishing more than half of the total amount – and a guarantee that the USA will oversee them in the years to come. Germany, in return saw the departure of French forces from the Ruhr area and a safety net on the edge of financial bankruptcy. To conclude, the plan removed the motives for bilateral conflict and made thus Franco-German rapprochement – which would last five years – possible. Further progress in Franco-German dialogue was halted by the death of Stresemann, clashes of industrialist cartels on both sides of Rhine, a revival of national propaganda in Germany and American ‘Black Tuesday’.¹⁷⁷

In the time of the great economic crisis, Germany started questioning its position and the burden of reparations, and demanded the right to equality with other powers. One can argue that the peace that Versailles Treaty established between Germany and France started revealing its blind spots in 1930s, when due to the political and economic situation both countries presented new political, economical or territorial claims which the opponent would not and could not fulfill. Moreover, it can be argued that the Versailles Treaty peace was in reality a false peace, as the two countries never ceased to perceive each other as an enemy. Feelings of suspicion, anxiety and mistrust were thus in 1930s not re-invented but once again strengthened on both sides. At the Lausanne conference of 1932, the position of France was considerably weakened as Germany achieved the reparation cuts it sought, as well as full military autonomy.¹⁷⁸ The poor economic situation and dissatisfaction of citizens was used by Hitler as a bridge to power and establishment of strict German nationalism. Moreover, he refused to continue the payment of reparations and despite the prohibition, started the rearmament of the country.

175 Schirmann, ‘Franco-German Relations, 1918-45’, 75-77.

176 Idem, 77.

177 Idem, 77-80.

178 Idem, 82.

Hitler considered France an enemy mostly for economic reasons. It was an obstacle in Germany's quest to occupy the resource-rich area to the east. Another reason for the inevitability of war was the goal of the Reich to control European nations and subjugate races to the vision of the pure Aryan race. Hitler and his followers – by smart calculations, deceptive attitudes and false promises – achieved full sovereignty over the territory granted to it by the Treaty of Versailles and control over coke and iron production.¹⁷⁹ These achievements were possible also due to the French policy of appeasement. By 1939 when European nations had witnessed the annexation of Austria, disappearance of Czechoslovakia and demands for Poland, it was clear this policy had bitterly failed and that war was inevitable.

By 1940 France was humiliated by being forced to sign an armistice and being divided into zones of German control. What is more, the French Vichy Government, which succeeded the Third Republic, openly collaborated with the Reich. It perceived the collaboration with Germany the best option, as it counted on further victories of Hitler. It can thus be concluded that Vichy France became a puppet in the hands of Germany because the French aimed at reserving some position in the German-dominated Europe in case of German victory. Fortunately for the French reputation and its position among the victors, there was the French Resistance and the Free French Forces which continued fighting against the German occupation. The Free French first sought to weaken and dismember the Reich as an act of vengeance. However, later the vision became to create a grand new Europe and a country with such economic potential as Germany could not be left out. Moreover, it can be argued that it was much better to control Germany than exclude it and let it grow in power again. The vision thus became to integrate a controlled Germany into a new Europe. Charles De Gaulle, the leader of the Free French Forces, envisioned 'a united Western Europe with France as its helm'.¹⁸⁰

After the end of the war, both France and Germany primarily needed to focus on their post-war reconstruction. However, it was not long after the end of the war that they set off on the path of co-operation and their mutual relations set the course of the development of Europe for the next half century.

179 Schirmann, 'Franco-German Relations, 1918-45', 83-85.

180 As quoted in: Schirmann, 'Franco-German Relations, 1918-45', 85.

4.3 Franco-German Friendship

'What a strange, cruel, beautiful and intense adventure it has been for these two fraternal peoples who needed more than a millennium to recognize each other as they are, to acknowledge each other and to unite.' – Francois Mitterand, 1995¹⁸¹

After the war, Franco-German relations had to be reshaped due to the changes in international relations and power structure. The dominance of the 'old' multi-polar world had been lost to the new superpowers. What is more, soon after the war all the countries were confronted with the reality of the bi-polar division of the world. With the coming of the Cold War, France gave up its initial desire for a dominant place in Europe and its claim for a dominant word in the 'German question'. However, its resentments towards its neighbor on the opposite side of Rhine were far from overcome.

The change in Franco-German relations has its origin in the appointing of Konrad Adenauer in the office of chancellor. The German historian, specialized in international relations, Ulrich Lappenküper, gives credit to Adenauer's willingness to take French security into account and his preference for Germany's incorporation into the West over its unification.¹⁸² However, even though Adenauer's beliefs and goals might have been appreciated by the French, the 'real' political rapprochement did not come until the 1950s. The 'Schuman Plan' of 1950, which proposed the creation of a new supranational organization of the countries of Europe, emerged from the failure of the policy of obstruction of Germany and realization that international co-operation and peaceful re-organization of post-war Europe had to be defined by a higher level organization.¹⁸³ The first organization created on the base of this proposal was the European Steel and Coal Community and it can be considered a forerunner of several European communities, including the European Union. And so, as Lappenküper puts it, 'the Franco-German relationship gained a new foundation with the implementation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the signing of two treaties on the abolition of the Occupation Statute of Germany, and the founding of the

181 Address by Francois Mitterand, May 8, 1995, in: Francois Mitterand, *De l'Allemagne, de la France* (Paris 1996) 241.

182 Ulrich Lappenküper, 'On the Path to a "Hereditary Friendship"? Franco German Relations since the End of the Second World War', in: Carine Germond and Henning Türk (eds.), *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe. From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners* (New York and Hampshire 2008) 151-153.

183 Robert Schuman was a French-German statesman and Prime Minister of France in the years 1947-1948. He was very important in building post-war European institutions and is considered one of the founding fathers of the European Union.

European Defense Community in 1952'.¹⁸⁴ It can be argued that these were of inalienable importance for political relations between the two countries. However, as Lappenküper convincingly argues, 'what Adenauer and [...] Schuman celebrated as a historical development seemed impertinence to many of their countrymen'.¹⁸⁵ Naturally, the people of both countries did not forget the enmity between the two nations passed from generation to generation for more than one and a half century. Above all, the horrors of the last from a number of wars, in which the countries stood on the opposite sides, were still fresh in their memory and so the people were full of suspicion, distrust and averse when confronted with the rapprochement efforts of Adenauer and Schuman.

By the second half of the 1950s the Franco-German entente grew stronger due to the international situation. It can be argued that due to a temporary warming up of the Soviet-American relations and the US claim of leadership in the Western Alliance, France and the Federal Republic of Germany grew closer together out of concern for security and influence. In January 1963 a political union 'à deux' was created by signing of a treaty of friendship by Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle who came into office in 1959 and was highly disliked by German public due to his ambitious calculations and foreign policy program aimed at excluding Germans from the Atlantic Alliance. The treaty of friendship was aimed at securing the Franco-German relations in international law and both Adenauer and de Gaulle in their remarks 'buried their nation's status as 'hereditary enemies''.¹⁸⁶ They thus introduced a brand new element into the politics, as well as the minds of their people. Despite rather big ruptures caused by the differences in values of the two countries and different political and economic orientations, such as the nuclear policy or the relations with the USA and Russia, they once again found common ground in the 1990s and since 1992 the two nations were considered the heart of the European unification.¹⁸⁷ As will be illustrated later, up until the present day it is difficult and undesirable for this 'couple' to give up this position.

4.4 Conclusion of chapters three and four

Until the mid-twentieth century France and Germany were two countries marked by hereditary enmity and great nationalistic division. For almost two centuries, their mutual relations were influenced by this phenomenon, probably more so than those of other European countries. This

184 Lappenküper, 'On the Path to a "Hereditary Friendship"?', 152.

185 Idem, 152.

186 Idem, 154.

187 Idem, 154-160.

claim is supported by the fact that the French and German forms of nationalism are clearly distinguishable, they both developed in different conditions and under different circumstances.

While French nationalism was rooted in the people long before the term ‘nation’ was actually applied, German people had to free themselves from the comfortable imitation of other nations, foremost the French, and start expressing and fighting for their uniqueness. What is more, the German nationalism developed in response to French nationalism, more precisely to the changed ideals of the French revolution. At first, the French aimed at bringing freedom and enlightenment to all peoples. However, under Napoleon’s lead, the desire to control and expand triggered a German response, and soon thereafter the national consciousness of the German Volk. With the War of Liberation of 1814, not only did German nationalism see its awakening, but also the French-German relations started a more than one and a half centuries long period of enmity. It took four major wars – the War of Liberation, the Franco-Prussian War, the First World War and the Second World War – for the two nations to find themselves on one side. Since the 1950s, they have set off on a path of reconciliation and have since been considered the heart and engine of the European unification.

During the long years of mutual enmity, in both nations a directed and purposeful education taught the ‘right kind of history’. Due to the different notions of nationalism and enmity between the two nations, history education was directed against the other. The images of one picturing each other as aggressive, greedy, false or pretentious surely did not encourage a mutual affection and one cannot be surprised by the antagonism that formed the main feature of the bi-national relations in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. The next chapter researches the changes in the mutual relations since the 1950s through changes in history education of both nations.

Chapter 5 Reflex of Franco-German relations in history education

5.1 *The past of history education in France and Germany*

The relation between Marianne – a woman character, an allegory of liberty and reason representing France as a nation – and Germania – personification of the German nation – was, as already briefly touched upon in sections 3.3 and 3.4, interesting also in history education. As can be derived from the previous overview of Franco-German relations and the image of ‘the other’ they mutually created and fostered, history education and history narration on both sides was in the period from 1870s to 1940s highly oppositional. In this time of antagonism and numerous conflicts, the history school books in both countries were designed and written in order to defend and emphasize their nationalism and borders which resulted from previous conflicts. The *Groupement d'Intérêt Public Formation Continue et Insertion Professionnelle Alsace*¹⁸⁸ indicates the *Modern Handbook for Alsace-Lorraine schools* (Metz, 1875)¹⁸⁹ as an example of such history school book. To provide a biased point of view on mutual historical conflicts and blame ‘the other’ was the main purpose of educational materials. *A Little Story of France in War. Dedicated to the Alsace-Lorraine people* was published in 1919 and its purpose was to explain to the people of Alsace Lorraine how Germany was utterly guilty for the First World War and how courageous and brave was France in fighting for the two regions:

‘The just war that came to an end turned to the world a sort of revelation: it has revealed the true France. The German General Staff had said to his soldiers: France is old, France is weak, France is degenerate. Democracy has stunned it, it deprived it of the life force and it corrupted it. A doddering race, a backward industry, through the political passions irretrievably comminuted society, this will all collapse under the weight of the first of our granates from our big canons. ‘We want to thrash the French!’, declared the emperor in his vanity. And many of our friends could not help but be disturbed in their hearts. Yourselves, regardless of your confidence about the skills of the French, which you had an opportunity to evaluate; the same as both the insatiable ambition of Germany and the extent of its industrial and military preparation; had the right to ask you if we would be strong enough to withstand the shock. The facts have given the answer to this: They answered by our victory. All the arrogant predictions of our

188 *Groupement d'intérêt public Formation continue et Insertion Professionnelle Alsace* is a French public organization oriented on education and integration into professional sphere.

189 History Online Project – Final Conference, Macerata, 18th September 2009, in: <http://www.pdfio.com/k-8403.html#> (accessed 03-03-2011).

enemies have become disgraced, and the fraternal concerns of our friends have been reassured'.¹⁹⁰

In the time of the Franco German 'honeymoon' of the Locarno Era – a period between 1925 and 1929, starting by signing of the Rhine Pact which secured the post-war territorial settlement between France and Germany and resulting in Germany's entry into the League of Nations the following year – the French and the German Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann made first steps to rapprochement between the two countries. In 1932, historians Fritz Kern and Jean de Pagne envisaged a 'manual of Franco-German relations to be written by both French and German scholars'.¹⁹¹ They emphasized that the cultural and civilization perspectives were best able to grasp the similarities, convergences, and exchanges between the two nations, whereas the political history, then dominant, led to excessive emphasis on divergences and conflicts. One can argue that the manual of Kern and de Pagne was not so much a matter of joint educational works, which would imply an adaptation of curricula of both nations; rather, 'these were joint materials for teaching and learning, intended to contribute towards overcoming national or nationalistic approaches to history tuition'.¹⁹² It was thus in early 1930s that Franco-German dialogues began.

In November 1935, the French and German historians met in Paris to discuss changes to national history textbooks of both countries. It is very interesting that two years after Hitler seized power these historians were still able to create thirty nine points directing the changes in French and German textbooks in order to remove enmity which they contained.¹⁹³ The Nazi regime eventually put a stop to these initiatives because the possibility of rapprochement was a thorn in the eye of its leader. The documents, however, served as a base for post-war dialogues.

In 1949, the presidents of both the German and French National History Associations, Georg Eckert and Edouard Bruley, met and started searching for a path to renew the dialogues. As Corine Defrance – active at the French National Centre of Scientific Research – and Ulrich Pfeil – a professor of history at the Jean Monnet University – claimed in the conference paper 'Citizenship Education Facing nationalism and Populism in Europe': 'The post-war German-French textbook discussions should be seen as a component of a pedagogy for peace, where a

190 J. Rageot and G. Bougle, *Petite Histoire de la France en Guerre. Dédicée aux Alsaciens-Lorrains/Kleine Geschichte Frankreichs im Krieg. Den Elsass-Lothringern gewidmet* (Paris, Nancy, Strasbourg, 1919), extract in: History Online Project – Final Conference, Macerata, 18th September 2009.

191 History Online Project – Final Conference, Macerata, 18th September 2009..

192 Idem.

193 Corine Defrance and Ulrich Pfeil, Conference Paper: 'Citizenship Education Facing Nationalism and Populism in Europe' (Sofia, November 6-8, 2008) 1.

huge mental divide had to be bridged after an era of confrontation and which was the result of erroneous historical opinions and presumptions'.¹⁹⁴ The dialogues about the denationalization of history textbooks were a civil initiative in the spirit of Konrad Adenauer's beliefs and aims.¹⁹⁵ Culture, not politics, took a dominant position, so that the dialogues would also be supported by politicians. A need to establish international relations on a new trans-national base arose and history was supposed to serve as a directive for new understanding, change and co-operation.

As UNESCO *Bilateral Consultations for the Improvement of History Textbooks*¹⁹⁶ show, annual meetings of French and German history teachers have been held since 1950, under the auspices of the *Société des Professeurs d'Histoire et de Géographie de l'Enseignement Public*¹⁹⁷ and the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände*.¹⁹⁸ Independently of the annual meetings, two meetings of a Commission of French and German historians were held in 1951. These were of great importance for the Franco-German history teaching dialogue as they adopted a series of recommendations relating to controversial points in the common history of the two countries during the period 1789-1933.¹⁹⁹ Controversial points in French and German history curricula fostering the hereditary enmity between the two countries have thus been dealt with since the early 1950s.

In August 1952 the third meeting – A Congress at Tübingen – brought further recommendations on how to achieve reconciliation between the two countries in their history textbooks. These recommendations are listed in UNESCO's reports from bilateral consultations for the improvement of history textbooks, published in *Educational Studies and Documents* in July 1953:

'3. As regards the second Treaty of Paris (1815), it must be borne in mind that it was regarded by the French people as a deep humiliation and that the resentment provoked by it extended to the entire work of the Congress of Vienna. The subsequent evolution

194 DeFrance and Pfeil, Conference Paper, 2.

195 Konrad Hermann Joseph Adenauer was a Mayor of Cologne and president of the Prussian State Council. Later he became a German statesman, whose anti-Nazism was strongly rooted already in 1933 and who led Germany from the ruins of the Second World War to become one of the most prosperous and significant nations in Europe through his dedication to democracy, capitalism, and anti-communism and commitment to Christianity and western-oriented policies.

196 United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'Bilateral Consultations for the Improvement of History Textbooks', *Educational Studies and Documents*, No. IV (July 1953).

197 'Société des Professeurs d'Histoire et de Géographie de l'Enseignement Public' is a French association – The Association of professors of History and Geography. The association also publishes a magazine *Historians and Geographers*.

198 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Lehrerverbände' is a Union of German Teachers' Associations.

199 United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 'International Understanding and Co-operation', *Documents Relating to Improvement of Textbooks and Teaching Materials: Some Reports of Bilateral Consultations on History Textbooks* (Paris, 1954).

of French domestic policy until the Second Empire is incomprehensible unless this psychological fact is borne in mind. [...]

5. French textbooks should emphasize the fact that Bismarck's policy, at the time of the eastern crisis of 1875-78, helped to avoid a European war; on the other hand, German textbooks should not fail to point out how deeply the French people at that time resented their political isolation, due to Bismarck's diplomacy'.²⁰⁰

The fourth meeting was held at Tours at the end of August 1954 and discussed the important period between the mid seventeenth century and the beginning of nineteenth century where the concept of hereditary enmity finds its roots. Resolutions made by the French and German historians at Tours were also documented by UNESCO:

‘3. The political and social situation in France and Germany at the end of the eighteenth century

A. The ‘Ancien régime’

The French representatives pointed out that German textbooks contained a number of inaccurate judgments (nature and role of parliaments, true nature of the royal power) as well as omissions (reaction of the nobility, the economic development and economic crisis at the end of the ‘Ancien régime’), due to the fact that, in general, these textbooks do not sufficiently take into account the results of scientific research.

B. The German Empire

French textbooks generally have very little to say about Germany as an Empire, because it is lacking in the attributes of sovereignty as conceived in France. Events are sometimes viewed in the perspective of the ‘little Germany’ of the succeeding epoch. [...] In analyzing the social fabric, most of the textbooks mention only the nobility and the peasants and have nothing to say about the middle classes. The particular characteristics of the Austrian State are insufficiently indicated.

4. The political and social work of the Revolution and Empire and its repercussions in Germany

A. The work accomplished in France

The presentation of this subject in German textbooks is not without errors and omissions. On many points, it corresponds even less to the facts and to the present state of historical science than the picture of the situation at the end of the ‘Ancien régime’.

B. The repercussions of the Revolution and Empire in Germany

²⁰⁰ UNESCO, ‘International Understanding and Co-operation’, 12-13.

French textbooks should emphasize the particular attitude of the Germans towards the State (their stronger attachment to an enlightened despotism and, consequently, their greater confidence in authority, their aversion to revolutionary changes) and thus make it possible to form a better idea of the German political attitude that prevailed during the greater part of the nineteenth century. Similarly, it is necessary to clarify the idea of Nation such as it was conceived after the end of the eighteenth century. For the French, its fundamental element is an act of will, a free and individual decision; for Germans, a Nation consists of those who have the same ethnical origin, language and history'.²⁰¹

In October 1953, five years after the dialogues were renewed; the French-German Cultural Agreement was signed. After the signing, Edouard Bruely pointed out that 'the French and German historians had not waited for the cultural agreement in order to set out in search of historical truth and fight against emotionally influenced judgments'.²⁰² The talks continued and were even intensified in 1960s and 1970s as the European Union was established and France and Germany saw themselves as its creators and nations in its lead. After a turbulent era of changes in late 1980s and early 1990s, the debates facilitated a great achievement in the field of history textbooks.

5.2 The present – A common Franco-German history textbook

In 2006, the first out of a series of three volumes of a common French-German history textbook was published. The project was initiated by a combined French-German Youth Parliament which in 2003 brought together five hundred children – aged fifteen to nineteen – from both countries.²⁰³ A recommendation to write a common textbook was unanimously approved by the plenary assembly. At the end of the meeting the French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder committed France and Germany to carrying out this project. As Defrance and Pfeil claim, the French and German governments had to undertake the project, as no other authority was capable of doing so.²⁰⁴ One can argue that this claim is legitimate as the German Federal Republic's sixteen states dispose of sovereignty over their educational and cultural matters and so the central government's power was necessary to persuade them not only to synchronize their curricula with the French ones, but mainly, find the consensus and a united

201 UNESCO, 'International understanding and co-operation', 15-16.

202 As quoted in: Defrance and Pfeil, Conference Paper, 2.

203 Idem, 2.

204 Idem, 2.

view among themselves. Carrying out such unique and significant project thus required devotion and commitment of both governments and a number of historians from both countries.

The creation of a common French/German textbook is, without a doubt, a very ambitious project. First of all because history textbooks are notoriously known for being nationally oriented and serving up national, even nationalistic, identities; even more so when one speaks of nations known for their long-lasting enmity, such as France and Germany. Second, thus, because of its symbolic value, being a political milestone in the bilateral relations of the two countries. The final reason to call the Franco-German history textbook an ambitious project is its aspiration to become a base for a common European history textbook. The teams of creators made no secret of the high hopes they put into the project, and the high level of publicity around the volumes also speaks for its exceptionality and educational, political and progressive significance. Moreover, in 2007 – the year in which Germany hold the presidency of the European Union - Annette Schavan, the German Minister of Education, proposed at the meeting of EU education ministers the creation of a common European history textbook, which would take as an example a common Franco-German history textbook. At that time the first volume of *Histoire/Geschichte* had already been published, the second volume was in preparation.

One can say that the last two named ambitions of the project also contribute to one of the most important controversies around the textbook - the question if the project was a societal initiative or a political one. This is even more so because the textbook follows more than a half-century of inter-governmental dialogues and co-operation of the two founding countries of the European idea. If the textbook was openly claimed as a political initiative, suspicions might have aroused. Questions about the real purpose of the book would have aroused and the book would have become the source of skepticism on the international scene. One has to keep in mind that all the previous nationally oriented history textbooks were also a political initiative and at the same time political propaganda and manipulation. The Franco-German history textbook was therefore never announced as an official manual and was denied to have been dictated by politicians. The authors created the book freely without any kind of political dictate and teachers who chose to use this manual – which, as Pfeil and Defrance state, is in competition with many traditional manuals – also did so based on their own decision. However, according to Defrance and Pfeil, ‘remarks made by government officials since 2006, in both France and Germany, imply that it [the project] might have been suggested to the young people participating in the Parliament’.²⁰⁵ The connection between the Young Parliament and the will of political authorities is demonstrated by approval or rejection of another demands presented by the Parliament. For example, the demand

²⁰⁵ Defrance and Pfeil, Conference Paper, 2-3.

that nuclear power be abandoned was contrary to Paris's policy and was therefore not approved, testifying to the Young Parliament's dependence on political decisions.²⁰⁶

5.3 Analysis of a common Franco-German educational project

'Under the title *Europe and the World from the Congress of Vienna to 1945*, this volume deals with a period shaped by three great wars that is particularly difficult for neighbors. When one considers this time of hostility and suspicion, the significance of the trust achieved today and the intensity of German-French relations becomes particularly clear.' – From the Introduction to *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt vom Wiener Kongress bis 1945*²⁰⁷

For the purpose of this thesis the second volume of the common history textbook, published in 2008, was used. *Histoire/Geschichte: Europe and the World from the Congress of Vienna to 1945*, covers a tragic period of three wars in which France and Germany stood on the opposite sides and is thus the most relevant for this research. The period from 1815 to 1945 is a time of revolutionary ruptures and violent conflicts, as well as the time when first steps towards organized European co-operation were made. This period thus presented greater challenge, both in the bilateral dialogues and for the creation of the textbook chapters, than to process the period after the Second World War which was characterized by bilateral rapprochement, reconciliation and co-operation on the reconstruction of Europe. In other words, the first volume deals with the period of already achieved relative friendship in contrast to the second one which deals with the period of hereditary enmity. Despite the first volume not being in the centre of attention, it needs to be said that some parts of analysis deal also with this part, as it covers some important topics, such as the partnership with the USA or the establishment of the European Union. Primarily, attention is paid to the first and the last part of the second volume, as these two parts deal with the most problematic periods in European history and the history of France and Germany. The first part is entitled *Das Zeitalter der Nationen*²⁰⁸ and the last one *Der Zweite Weltkrieg*,²⁰⁹ containing also a chapter on Europe and its nations: conflicts and provocations.

One can, without a doubt, say that the textbook enjoys a vibrant interest of media and worldwide educators and politicians. It is mostly pictured as something fascinating and unique.

206 DeFrance and Pfeil, Conference Paper, 3.

207 Daniel Henri, Guillaume Le Quintrec, Peter Geiss and collective, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 1.

208 'The Era of Nations (1814-1914)', in: *Histoire/Geschichte*, 8-76.

209 'The Second World War', in: *Histoire/Geschichte*, 296-368.

After all it is the first successful attempt to create something different from a national history textbook, and also it is the first textbook that claims to be a rupture with the past in the sense of its multi-perspective view on the history of Europe. Alongside the textbook itself, interviews with its authors and publishers – all obtained through email communication – as well as reviews and newspaper articles, will be employed for its analysis. A review necessary to introduce is the review written by historians of the *Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research* – situated in Braunschweig, Germany – in cooperation with the *German Historical Institute*, Paris, published on an official web page of Georg Eckert Institute.²¹⁰ This review was very helpful for the research as every chapter and every section of the textbook was reviewed by an expert in the field and so provided an excellent insight into particular aspects of the project. Because of the long-lasting dialogues between the French and the German side, nobody, in the carousel of questions, responses and advocacy of the project, seems to question if the book really fulfills its promises. Is the national dimension of the textbook really overcome and can one say that it is a pioneer of a textbook on a European level? Answers to these questions will be searched through three levels of analysis, which correspond to three main aims the textbook is claimed to have reached:

1. Overcoming of nationalistic dimension in the history textbook
2. Franco-German reconciliation
3. Franco-German history textbook as European example

5.3.1 Short introduction of the layout of the textbook

Histoire/Geschichte comprises of three hundred eighty seven pages, out of which three hundred sixty are occupied by actual study material divided into seven main parts which are further divided into nineteen chapters. The shortest chapter is the one dealing the development of mass culture throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century; the longest chapters deal with the era of nationalism and the periods between the two world wars. Chapters of the textbook open with a double page consisting of short overview of the topic or time period and a time line of important dates in the discussed period, and images or illustrations related to the topic of a chapter. Each chapter has minimum of two and maximum of seven subchapters. Every subchapter disposes of one page main text – explication of the topic of the particular chapter – accompanied by a blue text block, which provides definitions of terms used by the main text. A second page of a subchapter – always situated on the right side – comprises of pictures and yellow text blocks of

²¹⁰ Georg-Eckert-Institut (further GEI), 'Review of Histoire/Geschichte II', <http://www.gei.de/de/publikationen/eckert-dossiers/europa-und-die-welt.html> (accessed 20-12-2010).

various documents – such as letters, newspaper articles, parts of speeches, book extracts, ego documents, and so forth – that illustrate and further elaborate on the background information provided by the previous page. From what has been said so far about the composition of the textbook, it can be concluded that at least every second page of the textbook comprises of – or contains – pictures or images and the textbook can thus be characterized as very rich in illustration. A green text block in every subchapter asks a student an average of four questions about the discussed topic. Each chapter also contains a minimum of one and maximum of six *Dossier* sections, which provide side information related to the main topic – these can be in the form of written text but also pictures, maps, or graphs – or provides the exchange of French and German points of view. There are in total fifty three *Dossiers* in the textbook. Further the textbook consists of maps and statistics – there are nine double page sections consisting of a map or various graphs presenting statistics related to particular topics.

The list of names of textbook's creators and the foreword by the project group, followed by four pages of list of content and the word of thank by the publisher, occupy the first seven pages of the textbook. The textbook is concluded by seven pages of biographies of fifty three significant personalities of the nineteenth and twentieth century and by nine pages of glossary. The front cover page contains four pictures, the title of the book and logo's of the two publishing houses: French Nathan and German Klett. The back page of the cover is richer – besides two pictures, reader can find a short explanation of what the Franco-German textbook in fact is and what does it offer. First of all, as the title of the short paragraph says, it is a first common German-French history textbook. Furthermore, it is a common history textbook with identical content in German and French version. It combines the curricula of sixteen German Länder and France and for the first time it makes possible for the German and French pupils to prepare for their high school graduation from the same history textbook. Further the short paragraph speaks to German students and says that the textbook offers a new view of history of Europe and the world from the Congress of Vienna until 1945. It claims that *Histoire/Geschichte* is a textbook which includes the history of France and contains documents and sources, which integrate French and European materials.²¹¹

211 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, back cover page.

5.3.2 First level of analysis – Overcoming of the nationalistic dimension or Diminishing possibility of nationalistic interpretations

It is appropriate for the first level of analysis of the Franco-German project to be the successfulness of the textbook in overcoming the nationalistic dimension, as it was one of the main aims of its creators. Moreover, overcome nationalism is claimed to be its main characteristic and the reason why this project is considered to be such great change and step forward in the creation of history textbooks in Europe. It claims to have overcome nationalistic dimension through the content and its presentation and through the multi-perspectivity of views combined in the textbook, resulting in the textbook which can be seen, not only as fruit of Franco-German reconciliation, but also a study material that can serve as an example for future European history textbook.

5.3.2.1 Analysis of the presentation of the study material

5.3.2.1.1 Images versus text

As already concluded in the section 5.3.1, and as the German director of the project, Peter Geiss, claims: *‘The images occupy an important place in the Franco-German textbook’*.²¹² The images have indeed very obviously an important place in the book as they form a big part – roughly one hundred thirty pages – of the textbook’s content. However, the image richness is not necessarily a positive attribute. ‘Colorful collages of term definitions, pictures, timelines and quotations greet the reader boisterously with the result that only little space remains for the explanatory text’, as Defrance, Pfeil and Marcowitz, historians from Georg Eckert Institute for textbook research put it.²¹³ Indeed, it can be argued that there is far from enough space left for the theoretical explanatory part. Authors argue that it was a purpose of the book not to provide a ‘master narrative’ and have everything explained, but to give students a space for their own interpretations. *‘It seems necessary to provide benchmarks as part of a story that avoids, wherever possible, value judgments and biases.’*²¹⁴ On one side, it is very praiseworthy that the authors aim at promoting new trends in education and leave the space for student’s interpretation and thinking, however, by providing too little information, a space is also open for

212 Peter Geiss, in: Original transcript of an interview by Hubert Tison, a Secretary General of the French *Association of Professors of History and Geography* with Rainer Bendick, Rainer Riemenschneider, Peter Geiss and Rolf Wittenbrock (Berlin, 13th December 2010, obtained from Rainer Riemenschneider in February 2011) Appendix 1, Question 8. (This interview will be further in the thesis referred to as ‘Interview APHG’)

213 Corine Defrance, Ulrich Pfeil and Reiner Marcowitz, ‘Europe and the World from the Congress of Vienna to 1945’, in: GEI, ‘Review of Histoire/Geschichte II’, Introduction.

214 Peter Geiss, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 9.

misinterpretation. A tradition of a common view of French and German history is not yet strongly rooted in the educational curricula or minds of people in both countries. With the insufficient explication provided by the textbook, there is a great danger that the interpretations will slip into the traditional pattern of nationalistic view of history. What is more, along the education provided by school, history narrative is very influential, as it is closer to young person through every day life, experiences and impact of tradition transmitted by family or people distant from the school authority. Furthermore, one cannot omit the role of a teacher in educational process and his or her will to bring the innovation into history education or not. '*They [the teachers] must be very open-minded because it [the textbook] does not fit perfectly the existing syllabus*', claims Wittenbrock.²¹⁵ With the lack of explanatory text presented in the textbook, space is left for a teacher to present his or her interpretation of particular topic. The creators and the publishers of the textbook seem to be well-aware of the importance of the role of a teacher in educational process and the fact that the 'destiny' of their creation is partly in teachers' hands. This claim is supported by the responses of these interviewed when asked about the role of the teacher or about how the teachers accepted the textbook. The responses are either very short or the question remains ignored. When the question is answered, emphasis is put on the teachers' approval of images and special documents.²¹⁶

It is the quality and sufficient quantity of the explanatory text that affords an opportunity to create a tangible interpretation well-founded by the multi-perspective views and supported by the documents, illustrations, timetables, etcetera that further inspire a pupil's interpretation. The review by Defrance, Pfeil and Marcowitz also suggests that the Franco-German textbook is 'threatened by the danger that German teachers in particular might only use it as a goldmine for materials needed in class in addition to more comprehensive portrayals to be found in more traditionally designed German textbooks'.²¹⁷ The same claim applies to the French side. The lack of quality explanatory text thus leaves the possibility for nationalistic interpretations wide open.

The structure of the book contributes to the possibility of misunderstanding and traditional interpretations. For instance, the interwar political situation in part six of the textbook is incomprehensible without understanding the changes that occurred from 1920s onwards, such as the economic, societal and cultural developments.²¹⁸ These are explained in parts two and

215 Rolf Wittenbrock, in: Interview with Rolf Wittenbrock, (Obtained in February 2011), Appendix 2, Question 13.

216 For illustration see Interview with Rolf Witenbrock, Appendix 2, Question 12 and Interview with Ilias Körner-Wellershaus, in: <http://www.goethe.de/ges/prj/dnu/nac/en6482620.html> (accessed 21-01-2011) Question 4.

217 Defrance, Pfeil and Marcowitz, 'Europe and the World from the Congress of Vienna to 1945'.

218 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 232-294.

three of the textbook.²¹⁹ Whether the connections become clear to pupils ‘via such separate presentation of political, societal, social and cultural issues, however, appears doubtful’, as claimed by Christoph Cornelißen, a historian, currently working on obtaining his professorship in modern history at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf.²²⁰

It is also doubtful whether some methodological sections, such as ‘Analysing a Photograph’, are beneficial for the textbook or whether they rather discard its content.²²¹ The named section presents a well-known example of a manipulated photograph of Lenin on a speaker’s platform at the Sverdlov Square in Moscow in 1920.²²² The photograph from 1920 pictures Lenin’s companions, Trotski and Kamenew. These were, however, erased from the picture by 1927 in order to expel their legacies following their failed struggle against the policies of Joseph Stalin. It can be argued that this particular photograph is a good example of how pictures could be manipulated in the past and what the political meaning behind it was. However, the section does not stop here but directly requires pupils to use computers to explore the simplicity of manipulating photographs. As Daniela Kneissl²²³, a specialist on photograph analysis suggests in her review article for GEI on illustrative historical material:

‘The latest technical developments are thus directly related to the far less sophisticated possibilities of analogue photography in the first half of the 20th century. This is lethal within the context of the textbook. The inevitable conclusion is that each of the photographs given must be viewed from the prospect of their suitability for manipulation, including the photographs of the abuse of the Jewish population by the Wehrmacht and the SS’.²²⁴

One can therefore not omit the possibility that the French side – teachers, pupils, parents – will conclude that, for instance, the abuse of the Jewish population was even greater than shown on the picture but manipulated not to look so severe. The German side, on the other side, can conclude that the pictures were manipulated to make the German treatment of Jews look worse than it really was. Is this not how the traditional creation of the image of ‘the other’ looked like?

219 Idem, 78-154.

220 Christoph Cornelißen, ‘Breaking New Ground? On the Achievement and Shortcomings of a Franco-German Perspective on an Interwar Period’, in: GEI, ‘Review of Histoire/Geschichte II’, Part VI.

221 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 288 - 289.

222 Idem, 289.

223 Daniela Kneissl is also an author of section ‘EuroVisions. The visual language of unifying Europe’, published in Paul Gerhard, *Das Jahrhundert der Bilder. Bildatlas 1949 bis Heute* (Göttingen 2008), 48-55.

224 Daniela Kneissl, ‘Illustrative Historical Material in the Franco-German History Textbook’, in: GEI, ‘Review of Histoire/Geschichte II’, Visual Aids.

Examples of the pictures: Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 325, 331 and 332.

What is more, the analysis of photographs is missing, resulting in doubtfulness whether the pupils will grasp their meaning and symbolism, and form thus their own interpretation based on illustrative, symbolical and unbiased material.

As history didactics specialist, Andreas Körber, claims, learning about history is not only transmission of knowledge but rather ‘an event that encourages pupils to develop the skills necessary in order to think about history independently’.²²⁵ This assertion is indeed legitimate generally and even more so for the Franco-German history textbook as its authors aimed precisely at overcoming the traditional transition of national cannon and at providing an opportunity to create an interpretation of particular historical topics based on the multi-perspective view of history. As the textbook is oriented towards questions, problems and exercises, pupils are indeed challenged to think independently. However, as discussed above, the textual information provided, is in some cases insufficient to answer the assigned questions and exercises.²²⁶ Furthermore, as observed by Körber, the volume mostly contains questions²²⁷ that are ‘decidedly formulated as interpretative questions in retrospect, often, however, in such a way as to not call upon the pupils to form their own interpretation, but rather to point them towards interpretations that already exist’.²²⁸ Also, it can be argued that exercises do not require pupils to use the logic of their argument to draw conclusions. As an example supporting this assertion, commentaries on images can be used. In many cases they provide the information demanded by the exercise and so do not encourage independent thinking.²²⁹ Once again there is room for ready interpretations or for a teacher’s ‘advice’. Many of the central questions have limited solution possibilities. As Körber claims, ‘ultimately, they aim towards playing back an interpretation that can primarily be considered correct and which is known to the textbook authors and teachers, and which is to be accepted by pupils’.²³⁰ It can thus be argued that the textbook presents socially accepted interpretations without a true call to independent thinking. What is more, these interpretations have a bi-national base and thus do not invite drawing conclusions based on a multi-perspective view.

225 Andreas Körber, ‘The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics’, in: GEI, ‘Review of Histoire/Geschichte II’, Didactics.

226 Example: Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, ‘Fragen und Anregungen’(FA) 1, 27 - FA 1, 25 .

227 It is necessary to distinguish between ‘problems’ and ‘questions’ in each part of the volume. ‘Problems’ are presented on an introductory page of a double paged chapter and they introduce each chapter. ‘Questions’ complement each lesson that the chapters teach and they are usually to be found at the end of the double page.

228 Körber, ‘The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics’.

229 Example: Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 17 – FA 2 on Image 2.

230 Körber, ‘The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics’.

5.3.2.1.2 Multi-perspective textbook?

‘The criterion of suitability for developing a historical awareness not only demands providing the pupils with as authentic material possible from the relevant epoch; it also requires a presentation that is multiperspectival in the narrow sense, of relevant different perspective on controversies of the time with which pupils deal individually.’

– Andreas Körber²³¹

Each of interviewed members of the French and the German team of creators of the textbook stresses its multi-perspective value. It should, however, be discussed if the book really fulfills the multi-perspective aspirations or if it rather lapses into providing a bilateral view of the history of the two countries involved. A textbook with an aspiration to serve as a pioneering initiative and example for a European history textbook should not overcome nationalistic views of history by replacing it by a bi-nationalistic view of history. It can, however, be argued that this is precisely what the Franco-German textbook does. The history of Europe and the world, as the title *Europe and the World from the Congress of Vienna to 1945* says, is devoured by the history of France and Germany. Even though the authors claim that the textbook is not a manual of Franco-German history, but a Franco-German history textbook of European and world history, this is in fact the case. *‘It is indeed a Franco-German manual of history, not a manual of Franco-German history. There is no question of retreat into strictly bi-national’*, says Le Quintrec in an interview.²³² However, as a Polish historian, Wojciech Roszkowski opposes, the history of the two countries makes up sixty three percent of the content of the book.²³³ What is more, thirty two out of fifty five historical personages, important in the periods discussed in the volume and described at the end of it, are Germans or Frenchmen.²³⁴ A student will not be able to find Franz Joseph, Abraham Lincoln or Queen Victoria among the significant figures of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Furthermore, and importantly, except for very few exceptions, the textbook does not contain any other than French or German point of view. How can a textbook be considered multi-perspective if the only perspectives presented are French and German? Pupils should be able to learn about other perspectives and to get acquainted with a wider scale of opinions and judgments in order to develop an interpretation of historical events independent from teacher’s dictate or widely accepted interpretations.

231 Körber, ‘The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics’.

232 Guillaume Le Quintrec, in: Interview with Guillaume Le Quintrec (Obtained through Rainer Riemenschneider in February 2011) Appendix 3, Question 3.

233 Wojciech Roszkowski, ‘Opinion on French-German Secondary School History Textbook’.

234 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 370 – 376.

Another important characteristic of a national view of history is that it concentrates on the events of the history of a particular nation and omits events in the history of other nations. The omitted events are usually considered impertinent or, quite the opposite, feared as greater and so capable of overshadowing the importance of the national historical events. The Franco-German history textbook omits important events in the European, as well as, world history and concentrates on the national histories instead. Students will find hardly any information on Austria-Hungary, Russia or the USA in the 19th century.²³⁵ They could as well think that slavery is still a present phenomenon in the USA as they get no information whatsoever about its abolition or the war that led to this important milestone in world history. Based on the criterion above, the Franco-German history textbook can be considered a bi-national textbook and thus overcomes nationalism at best on the bi-national – Franco-German – level. Körber very convincingly names the textbook a ‘(bi)national autobiography’.²³⁶

5.3.3 Second level of analysis – Franco-German reconciliation

The second level of analysis is closely connected with the first one, as overcome nationalism and reconciliation of the two nations – in the past known for their hereditary enmity – are, one way or the other, two sides of one coin. Why one way or the other? The previous part proved that the Franco-German history textbook is neither free from the possibility of nationalistic interpretations, nor acquitted of nationalistic dimension. Nationalism is overcome at best on a bi-national level. It thus leaves the textbook with two options:

- It will further prove to be a failure to achieve its aspirations to be a textbook reconciling the two nations and, through such great achievement, to be worth to serve as a European example.
- The fact that nationalism is in fact overcome on a bi-national level will prove to be a true rapprochement and reconciliation of the two nations resulting in obvious emphasizing of their respective histories and their perspectives.

The second level of analysis of the Franco-German educational project thus aims to discover whether nationalism was really overcome on a bi-national level and so Franco-German reconciliation through history education is something to be looked upon by other European nations and can thus serve as an example for the future European history textbook.

235 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 8 – 184 and Rozskowski, ‘Opinion on French-German Secondary School History Textbook’, 2.

236 Körber, ‘The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics’.

5.3.3.1 Recognition of one's guilt and taking responsibility for historical events?

'Alongside topics and materials adequately familiar on both banks of the Rhine, this bilateral textbook repeatedly reveals those, which possess a more-or-less 'iconic' status within their respective tradition, yet which are missing in their 'own' outdated textbooks. In this respect, this textbook does seem suitable for familiarizing pupils with the historical culture of the respective 'other' country.' – Andreas Körber²³⁷

Indeed, it can be argued that the most valuable parts of the textbook are naturally those where the French and German point of view meet in a comparison. These can be found at the end of each of seven parts of the book under the name *Deutsch-Französischer Perspektivenwechsel*.²³⁸ As Geiss explains: *'They contain different scientific interpretations about historical phenomena. These files enable students to understand that scientific interpretations should not be confused with reality itself, but that they help us form our own judgment on historical facts. It seems to me that the study of history must always go through the recognition of plurality of possible narratives'*.²³⁹ These are supplemented throughout the chapters by various documents illustrating the French and German point of view. Rainer Bendick, a historian and researcher of textbooks and history teaching in France and Germany, is very convincing in his claim that the exchanges of views throughout the textbook are without a doubt of a great value.²⁴⁰ His claim can be considered convincing because the exchanges in perspectives of the two nations are the most evident sign of overcoming of nationalistic views of history. In spite of the fact that it can be argued that such valuable elements in the book should have found their place in more than ten occasions, its importance can not be diminished as such an open illustration of the view of 'the other' is the first in history textbooks in Europe.

However, it can be argued that the exchange of perspective could be improved by juxtaposition of contemporary and recent viewpoints of the history of 'the other'. Supposing the viewpoints from older textbooks of both countries would be presented in contrast to each other and to recent views, pupils would be able to see clearly the complexity of the bilateral relations of both countries and constructed images of each other based on nationalistic myths, fears and mutual blame. Nationalistic interpretations would thus be clearly perceivable and in the light of recent viewpoints ridiculed.

237 Körber, 'The Franco-German History Textbook from the Perspective of Specialist Didactics'.

238 Franco-German exchange of perspectives.

239 Geiss, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 9.

240 Rainer Bendick, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 10.

Can it thus, in the light of above concluded facts, be claimed that nationalism is really overcome at least on bi-national level and that France and Germany achieved a true reconciliation through the common project? It can be argued that reconciliation in a history textbook can be achieved in two basic manners: through recognizing one's guilt and subsequent acceptance on the other side, or through lessening the guilt and refusing the responsibility for historical events.

In the case of France and Germany it is very curious that none of the interviewed mentions anything in connection with nationalism. It seems as if the issue of nationalism was out of question because of the long dialogues between French and German politicians, as well as historians and educators. *'Nationalistic representations have gone away in both countries nowadays. All you can find actually are slight nuances in perceptions of few remaining historical items'*, claims Wittenbrock.²⁴¹ As a respond to the question if there were any nationalistic stumble blocks in the dialogues between France and Germany, he answered: *'No, the German and French editors showed much empathy in order to create the necessary awareness for eventually diverging perceptions and interpretations'*.²⁴² The textbook does indeed comprise parts which do show the awareness of diverging perceptions, but they, at the same time, do not show a consensus in approach of the controversial topics that cause such diversion. These topics are omitted or just slightly mentioned rather than openly dealt with. One example of such negligence is the 'Rhine Crisis' of 1839 – 1840. Even though it is an important event in the history of Franco-German relations, carrying a great significance for the perception of self and 'the other', it is only briefly touched upon in the Franco-German history textbook. The images of 'the other' induced by the crisis deepened the animosity between the French and the German and caused the German progressive move towards unity. This correlation is barely mentioned in the textbook:

'The French demands for the cession of the left bank of German territories in 1840, due to crisis between France and the German federal government, triggered on both sides of the Rhine violent nationalist emotion'.²⁴³

Another example is provided by Rainer Marcowitz in his review of the first chapter of the textbook. It considers the following citation from the textbook's chapter on the German-French War:

'The French army surrendered in the Battle of Sedan on 2nd September 1870 and Napoleon was taken captive. Concerning the revolutionary revolts in Paris, the

241 Wittenbrock, Interview with Rolf Wittenbrock, Appendix 2, Question 8.

242 Idem, Question 7.

243 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 18.

Republican ‘government of national defence’ continued fighting under the leadership of Leon Gambetta and Jules Favre’.²⁴⁴

Marcowitz refers to this short part as a ‘laconic comment’ which is ‘indeed not incorrect’.²⁴⁵ However, this ‘laconic comment’ misrepresents the fact that there was an initial desire on the French side to end the Franco-German War, which was not favored from the start. The French leadership was also willing to accept the creation of the Reich, with the exception of Bismarck’s claim to Alsace and Lorraine. As Marcowitz in his contribution to the review of *Histoire/Geschichte* writes:

‘It would certainly be desirable to omit the issue of responsibility when depicting the Franco-German War. Firstly, this is a topic that remains explosive amongst academics even today; secondly, this would be a good opportunity to illustrate the particular advantage that the makers of textbooks claim as their own: ‘the change of perspective that emphasizes the intertwining of historical strands of development, the common as well as the disputed memory and the diverse and various approaches to one and the same reality’’.²⁴⁶

Interesting is also to see how professor Wittenbrock reacted to the simple question: ‘How did both sides deal with controversies in history?’. ‘*There are no events consciously concealed. The contents of History textbooks are subject to many investigations of history scholars. They would not accept that any events were brushed bashfully under the carpet.*’²⁴⁷ His irritated response shows that the topic of controversies in history is a sensitive spot for this member of the steering commission. Furthermore, the fact that it does not correspond with the question suggests that there may be more concealed events than the creators are willing to admit, as one can also see from the examples above.

One of the problematic fields in Franco-German history has been their relation to the USA and the role of this nation in Europe and the world. According to Le Quintrec:

‘*A little ‘hot’, caused by the emergence of significant differences in opinion, was the topic of the role of the USA in Europe and worldwide. The French authors, being ‘Gaullist’*²⁴⁸ *were quick to stress the American hyper-power, the temptations of*

244 Idem, 38.

245 Reiner Marcowitz, ‘The ‘Long’ 19th Century: A European History of Conflict and Co-operation’, in: GEI, ‘Review of *Histoire/Geschichte II*’, Part I.

246 Marcowitz, ‘The ‘Long’ 19th Century’.

247 Wittenbrock, Interview with Rolf Wittenbrock, Appendix 2, Question 14.

248 The distinction between ‘Gaullist’ and ‘Atlanticist’ dates to the 1960s when the Western Germany stood on the side of partnership with the USA and De Gaulle envisioned a ‘European Europe’ equal to superpowers.

unilateralism in Washington or the dangers of US cultural imperialism. The Germans, marked as 'Atlanticist', saw it as a anti-American value judgment, they wished to present the United States first as the champions of democracy, having helped to reconstruct Germany. Heated discussions, where every word was weighted, resulted in a balanced text'.²⁴⁹

With the topic of the USA, the authors regressed to the 'old' way of writing textbooks. In the second volume the history of the USA and its role in Europe and world is to a large extent, simply omitted. In the first volume²⁵⁰, the role of the USA in the postwar Europe is approached differently in the French and German versions.²⁵¹ This disruption in Franco-German views and disability to find consensus does not testify in favor of overcome differences and a common view of history, or resent for that matter. What is more, the omission of American history and its role in world history, together with praise of the European Union, obviously did not find positive responds in the USA or Great Britain – a prominent Euro-skeptic country and, even though a member of the European Union, a firm believer in preserving as much of its sovereignty as possible. The textbook was marked as 'colored by anti-Americanism' by the British newspaper *The Times*.²⁵² 'Through its willingness to co-operate with the Third World, its attachment to multilateralism, its dialogue with other regions, the EU appears as a model on the international scene. [...] By contrast, modern American unilateralism enshrined by George W. Bush is widely criticized throughout the world', quotes the newspaper from the textbook.²⁵³

Probably the most awaited topic, along with the emergence of nationalism in the time of the French-German War, was the topic of the Second World War. It can be concluded that the blame and responsibility of Germany for its horrors has conspicuously been diminished. To start with, the beginning of the path to war is ascribed to Japan. It can justifiably be claimed that the occupation of Manchuria in 1931 marks the start of the path to the war in the Pacific; however, the weight of Hitler's actions – such as the rearmament despite the prohibition and expansionism, especially taking over of Czechoslovakia and Poland, which in fact marks the start of the Second World War in Europe – cannot be diminished. Chapter seventeen of the textbook deals with the topic of 'Europe under the German rule' and is mainly concerned with the character of German

249 Le Quintrec, Interview with Guillaume le Quintrec, Appendix 3, Question 1.

250 Daniel Henri, Guillaume Le Quintrec, Peter Geiss and collective, *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt seit 1945* (Leipzig, 2006).

251 Barbara Grüber, 'Joint German-French History Book – a History-maker Itself', *Deutsche Welle*, 10-07-2006, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,2078903.00.html> (accessed 21-12-2010).

252 *The Times*, Daily Newspaper, May 4th, 2006.

253 Idem.

rule and does not concentrate on the terrible actions and of the German leader and his followers and the fact that they found support in the German public.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, the chapter starts with the crimes of communism and points to Hitler as a ‘warrior’ against them. Ulrich Pfeil claims in his review article that ‘the chapter suggests an interpretation template for the pupils, who are advised to explore the matter via two ‘Questions and Proposals’.²⁵⁵

- ‘Explain why the treatment of the Soviet prisoners of war was unprecedented’.²⁵⁶
- ‘Discuss, why it can be said that the National Socialist crimes were unprecedented in the course of history’.²⁵⁷

The authors thus suggest the answer to the question ‘whether the Bolsheviks’ assassination of class might have been the logical and factual precedent for the racial murder committed by the National Socialists’, as Pfeil puts it.²⁵⁸ They do so by placing the crimes of communism on the same level as the Holocaust. They are both denoted as genocides, only Holocaust comes as a respond to the genocide carried out by the Red Army and the Communist Party in which the Jews had a completely ‘free hand’. The Holocaust seems thus to be a natural respond to the communist genocide, only, as the textbook puts it, ‘the gas chambers lent the Holocaust the unique character of genocide carried out in industrial proportions’.²⁵⁹

Furthermore, right after the part on communism, two subchapters on the German society and its resistance since 1933 follow and only after pupils can learn about ghettos and the extermination of the Jews. It can be argued that the dimensions of the German resistance are much exaggerated. Pupils can learn about the resistance group ‘The White Rose’ before they get a chance to learn about the policies and actions that actually called for resistance. It would have been much more appropriate and correct for the textbook to have mentioned, first of all, the support that German public gave to its leader and emphasize the small number of the people who actually resisted, not the other way round.

It can be argued that attention must be paid not to over-reduce the amount of guilt that legitimately occupies a place in the German history. The two nations cannot be reconciled by restoring to glozing of history. As has been already said before, the explanatory text is not so rich and thus the danger of further idealizing and misinterpretations is very possible. The question of the Germans as victims of the war is also touched in the textbook and French students can learn a

254 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 320-339.

255 Ulrich Pfeil, ‘A Sensitive Topic of Shared History?’, in: GEI, ‘Review of *Histoire/Geschichte II*’, Part VII.

256 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 325.

257 Idem, 335.

258 Pfeil, ‘A Sensitive Topic of Shared History?’.

259 Henri, Le Quintrec and Geiss, *Histoire/Geschichte*, 334.

lot about the German resistance during the Second World War.²⁶⁰ To sum up, there has been a lot of weight taken from the German shoulders by the common Franco-German textbook.

Ulrich Pfeil also points to the progress in the French educational system. He refers to the assertion of Max Gallo, a historian and politician who claims that ‘the Second World War remains the point to which all political debates [in France] inevitably return [...]. It is a past that will not pass’.²⁶¹ The French are often accused of obscuring their part in the war or trying to keep quiet or place emphasis on Resistance rather than the actions of the Vichy Regime. As an example a request of state president Nicolas Sarkozy to read the letter of farewell of a seventeen year old communist resistance fighter in all French school as an example of courage and sacrifice can be used.²⁶² Most of the teachers and historians refused to do so and so refused an attempt for history to be dictated from above. In the Franco-German history textbook, the Vichy Regime is openly designated as having played a role in the persecution of French Jews. It can thus be argued that the French side stepped, in this matter, on the path of new approach of historical events.

5.3.3.2 Educational methods

An aspect where the division between the French and the German authors is the best visible are the educational methods in the two countries and the way the interviewed authors and publishers spoke about them.

*‘Difficulties during the project were revealed in the method more than content. The two countries have, indeed, a very different conception of the teaching of history and thus also a differently designed manuals. In France, education is based on both lecture and document analysis. In Germany, the courses are more interactive: teachers organize discussions and ‘role play’, where students have to argue. The manuals provide much longer lessons, since the information is not really being provided.’ – Guillaume Le Quintrec*²⁶³

Thus far, Le Quintrec is being quite indulgent is stressing the differences between the French and German side. However, further in his answer to the question: ‘What were the most commonly encountered problems?’, he brings the matter to a higher level:

‘The provided specifications were fairly precise, rather close to the French model – short lessons and many questioned documents. The Germans were then forced to flow

260 Idem, 326-330.

261 Pfeil, ‘A Sensitive Topic of Shared History?’.

262 Idem.

263 Le Quintrec, Interview with Le Quintrec, Appendix 3, Question 2.

*into the mold of compelling them. We then realized that national resistance is not specifically where you would think it to be. The lesson of two or three pages, based on tight argument is not a universal model: it is very French, 'Cartesian', based on a long rhetorical tradition. The 'essay exercise', very familiar in France, is virtually unknown anywhere else. German (but you could also say British or American) teaching culture is based on different exercises, such as 'test' of 'folder.'*²⁶⁴

In another interview Le Quintrec claims:

*'It took a lot of upstream work to achieve a common vision. In France, history textbooks usually function in double-page lessons, with the lesson on the left and the documents on the right, or even double-page dossiers. The iconography is very important, and our French books are attractive. Finally, students are supervised by the very questions that guide them closely. The traditional German manual is almost opposite: relatively austere, it offers many lessons followed by numbered documents, which lead students to build their approach. Fiction or educational ideal?'*²⁶⁵

It is clear that the French editor in chief not only makes a sharp division between the teaching cultures of the two nations but also puts the French one on a higher level. One can feel his pride in the French tradition and the pride that the common history textbook actually adopted the French model and it was the Germans who had to adapt to the French model. It appears that according to Le Quintrec, the French textbooks have everything: attractive form, extensive lessons which provide sufficient information, documents that support the lesson and questions which lead students to an understanding of the presented topic. In spite of the fact that the project of a common French-German textbook was launched because obviously there were issues in both French and German textbooks that needed innovation and change, one does not hear any of the interviewed textbook editors or publishers speak about them or speak about the contribution and enrichment from the other side.

However, this critique does not pertain only to the French side. The German side does not keep aloof in the comments on the teaching culture, even though one might say that in this matter the German side is more 'politically correct'. Its representatives criticize and, in places, mock the French by stealth. Rainer Riemenschneider, a historian being active for over twenty years at the GEI, where he organized many bi-national meetings for the improvement of, and reconciliation in, history textbooks, said in an interview with Hubert Tison:

264 Le Quintrec, Interview with Le Quintrec, Appendix 3, Question 2.

265 Guillaume Le Quintrec, Interview with Guillaume Le Quintrec and Françoise Fougeron, http://www2.cndp.fr/seconaire/franco-all/2006/int_fougeron_lequintrec.htm (accessed 13-02-2011), Question 5.

'Its writing [of the textbook] took us much time and effort on both sides. [...] There were no major obstacles, but I felt over the years that on the German side the hard work had remained constant, whereas on the French side we felt sometimes hesitation'.²⁶⁶

He also claimed:

'Another hesitation was felt in the French editorial team – it seemed to have doubts about the validity of the transnational manual, but it may be a subjective impression on my part'.²⁶⁷

Peter Geiss, the German editor in chief, obviously kept the aim and purpose of the textbook in his mind when he said that even though it initially seemed difficult to combine the two teaching cultures, the two sides realized that they are actually complementary to one another.

'By bringing students to make personal judgments based on logical argumentation and precise knowledge it achieves a synthesis of the best traditions of French and German: the knowledge and logical rigor, without which the decision is purely subjective'.²⁶⁸

A question later, however, of the same interview when the question about the treatment of illustrations was asked, one can perceive a slight reluctance to ascribe the success of the illustrations in the textbook to the French side. It can be argued that Geiss suggests that the importance and success of iconography in the Franco-German textbook, is a result of the German intervention with the way illustrations are used in French textbooks. Clearly from the words of Geiss, if it was not for the Germans, the French would only speak about their paintings and what is more, provide pupils with ready facts, so that they cannot create their own interpretation:

'The image occupies an important place in the Franco-German textbook. This, probably French, contribution was greatly appreciated by students and professors in Germany. In recent years, German historians attach greater importance to the image as a historical source, but it is rare that a textbook publisher devotes two pages to the analysis of a painting reproduced in large format. Regarding the emphasis on image, the Franco-German textbook is very close to the French educational system, but we tried to avoid providing interpretation legends too explicit to enable students to 'read' images themselves based in the documentation accompanying iconography'.²⁶⁹

266 Rainer Riemenschneider, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 6.

267 Idem, Question 6.

268 Geiss, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 7.

269 Idem, Question 8.

The German low opinion of French teaching culture is also expressed in the words of Rainer Bendick:

*‘There is a very clear structure, text and the supporting documents are well measured. That is the contribution of the French side. But the manual also contains elements that allow the German educational orientation towards student activities, which do not simply repeat what the teacher said’.*²⁷⁰

One can argue that it is, at best, strange that both sides point to the differences and the weaknesses of the other side. None of the interviewees pointed to the weaknesses of his ‘own side’ and really stressed the asset of the other side. Both sides do say that they got to the result together with the other side, however, by *correcting* what the other side did wrong in their textbooks and not *learning* from one another. It can be argued that that is not an approach which can be referred to as non-nationalistic or reconciling, since there is no acceptance or approval of the co-creating side.

5.3.4 Third level of analysis – The Textbook as a European Example?

The Franco-German textbook failing on two previously discussed levels, becomes the subject of the search of its real purpose on the third level of its analysis. As the previous analysis proved, it cannot be considered as a textbook in which nationalism is overcome by multi-perspectivity or a true reconciliation of two nations involved in the project. What is thus the purpose of the textbook and what is the reason for creating such high aims by the creators of the textbook, the same as the French and German politicians who have given their full support to the project? Furthermore, the third level of analysis aims to discover whether *Histoire/Geschichte* could in fact become an example for a European history textbook and actually trigger such ambitious project, or whether the reactions of the French and German people and the rest of Europe prove a failure in the last of its three main aims, too.

5.3.4.1 Politics and the positioning of France and Germany at the heart of Europe

‘The Franco-German co-operation is seen as a lever, as a gateway to Europe and the world. It is the long tradition of Franco-German co-operation that will hopefully open the way for a European history textbook.’ – Guillaume le Quintrec²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Bendick, Interview APHG, Question 11.

²⁷¹ Le Quintrec, Interview with Le Quintrec, Appendix 3, Question 3.

As already mentioned, from the very beginning of the process of its creation, there were suspicions that the Franco-German textbook was in fact a political initiative. Understandably, the governments of both countries and later the editing and publishing teams, negated any such claims and asserted that the Young Parliament as the author of the idea has full support of both governments, yet, this is also where their involvement ends. Six years after the presentation of the idea, the involvement of governments is no longer hidden and the discussion whether it was dictated by the politicians is very vibrant. The discussion can be started by a clear statement of Françoise Fougeron, the director of the French editing team, which she gave as an answer to the request to provide a short history of the project: *'In fact, the political decision is prior to our intervention, so to speak. A decision was made to propose a common high school history handbook in three volumes, available in French and German'*.²⁷² Likewise, Rolf Wittenbrock claims: *'The project started as a bottom-up project, but very quickly it became a project backed intensively by both governments searching to highlight the special relations and friendship between France and Germany. It continued as a top-down project'*.²⁷³

Inevitably, the question why the governments of the two countries should be interested in history education forces its way into one's mind. The first reason can be found in the second chapter of this research project – in a discussion about the relation between history education and politics. The conclusion was that history education since its development has served as a political tool for communicating the nation-building ideas to the people of a nation. The governmental intervention with the Franco-German history educational project shows that it has the potential of serving certain political aims of both French and German governments. This potential can be found in the words of the interviewed members of the two creators' teams:

'There are special bi-national relations between France and Germany: politicians of both countries meet regularly since 1963. These special relations need a special project highlighting the special shape of their relations in order to foster and symbolize French-German friendship'. – Rolf Wittenbrock²⁷⁴

'It is true that politicians in both countries have followed closely and with great sympathy the progress of this book, because for them it is a unique project which is sort of the cornerstone of the Franco-German reconciliation.' – Rolf Wittenbrock²⁷⁵

272 Françoise Fourgeon, Interview with Le Quintrec and Fougeron, Question 1.

273 Wittenbrock, Interview with Wittenbrock, Question 9.

274 Idem, Question 4.

275 Wittenbrock, Interview APHG, Appendix 1, Question 1.

'The Franco-German cooperation is seen as a lever, as a gateway to Europe and the world.' – Guillaume Le Quintrec²⁷⁶

'This manual is a work of deepening relations between our two countries, which can be useful when Europe has to solve many issues related to its enlargement.' – Francoise Fourgeon²⁷⁷

Since the 1950s, when the co-operation of the two biggest European economies was necessary for post-war reconciliation and economic recovery, and later for European unification, France and Germany take pride in their special position in Europe. They pioneered in the reconciliation dialogue, in the unifying tendencies; they were the core of Europe. What could be more logical and also advantageous than being also the first to bring the changes into history education and to create educational materials that could once again serve as a core of European unification, this time through history education? It can be argued that such a step, if successful, would, at least temporarily, secure the position at the heart of Europe, which France and Germany have been losing due to the growth of the European Union.

'This manual is the work of deepening relations between our two countries, which can be useful when Europe has to solve many issues related to its enlargement.' – Wittenbrock²⁷⁸

'If this book contributes to a genuine European integration, then we will have met the challenge.' – Le Quintrec²⁷⁹

It can be concluded from the above claims that the Franco-German history textbook has a clear political function. This function is to highlight the extraordinariness of Franco-German relations and to defend and strengthen the couple's position in the heart of Europe. France and Germany, obviously, still consider themselves a motor of European unification and clearly desire other European countries to perceive them likewise. A unique project in history education, aspiring to be a multi-perspective view of European history and become the base for European history education, building tolerance and unity between Europeans, is certainly a wise approach to achieve such goal.

276 Le Quintrec, Interview with Le Quintrec, Appendix 3, Question 3.

277 Fourgeon, Interview with Fourgeon and Le Quintrec, Question 7.

278 Le Quintrec, Idem, Question 7.

279 Idem, Question 7.

5.3.4.2 Reactions in France and Germany

Notwithstanding the fact that the first two volumes of the book were sold in forty thousand copies – which are still deep below the threshold of one hundred thousand copies for a textbook to be considered a success – in each country, the political aspect of the textbook did not at all prove to be beneficial. By the time the third volume was published in March 2011, the French publisher Nathan printed only seven thousand copies. There are more reasons for this failure. First of all, it can be argued that the level of ‘unity’ between the French and the German public is not as high as politicians of both countries would like to believe. The reconciliation and friendship between the two countries is mostly happening on the economic and political level. The ambitious history textbook project can be presumed to have served as a spiritual bridge, or at least the base for this bridge, between the two nations. However, already from the beginning, the textbook was mainly distributed to bi-lingual schools only. Understandably, it was a good asset for teachers and pupils obtaining their high school diploma in both French and German. ‘It is true that the demand is particularly strong in European and AbiBac [stands for German Abitur and French Baccalauréat; it is a special kind of school where pupils in France and Germany can obtain simultaneously high school diploma in both languages, M.M] classes, where the version in the language of the partner is used’, says Geiss.²⁸⁰ ‘European sections, those preparing for AbiBac schools, or high schools in border regions will certainly have a major interest’, agrees Le Quintrec.²⁸¹

Obviously, the above named categories do not stand for the whole of France and Germany and the textbook sales prove that both countries are not as willing to find a common view of history as presumed. Moreover, even if *Histoire/Geschichte* is used, it is used only as a support to other textbooks used by teachers. As Stefan Seidendorf, a researcher at the French-German Institute in Ludwigsburg, claims: ‘In both countries, teachers and trainers are not prepared to use such a manual. In Germany, the important thing is to train citizens, to encourage students to ask questions. In France, education is based on the essay and organizing knowledge. Only people already sensitized to Franco-German know that the two approaches are not opposed but complementary.’²⁸² The discussed methodological differences thus very clearly show the gap between the two countries not only by being very distinct but also by the reluctance to accept the ways of the other. What is more, the role of the teacher in educational process is crucial and if they are not ready or willing to bridge the two nations through history education, it is very

280 Geiss, Interview APHG, Question 3.

281 Le Quintrec, Interview with Le Quintrec and Fougeron, Question 6.

282 Frederic Lamaitre, ‘Malheureux manuel Franco-Allemand’, *Le Monde*, May 24, 2011, http://www.lemonde.fr/cgi-bin/ACHATS/acheter.cgi?offre=ARCHIVES&type_item=ART_ARCH_30J&objet_id=1158871&clef=ARC-TRK-NC_01 (accessed 24-05-2011).

improbably going to happen. In addition, as already illustrated, the interviewed editors and publishers also show that they realize the significance of the role of teachers through the ‘deafening silence’ they keep about the topic.

Last but certainly not least, the very limited success of the textbook can be searched in its political function. Old suspicions and blames are again floating to the surface and make two nations more nationalistic than before the ‘revolutionary’ step in history education was undertaken. It is the political support that creates these suspicions and distrust. Seidendorf argues: ‘Eighty percent of French people say it is a German book, and vice versa.’²⁸³ Both nations suspect and blame one another for manipulation: the French see the textbook as manipulation from the German side and Germans suspect the same thing of the French side. Furthermore, people see the textbook simply as a premeditated move of politicians and thus cannot look at it from the perspective of true reconciliation of history and an effort to ‘*reduce prejudice caused by mutual ignorance*’.²⁸⁴ What makes the situation even worse is the fact that the last volume of the textbook was launched at the ceremony, held at The Senate of Berlin, attended by leading German and French authorities, the world press, publishing, education and pedagogy authorities.²⁸⁵ Even though the creators of the textbook deny it, conceivably, it is difficult to persuade the public and teachers that the textbook does not have an official stamp.

5.3.4.3 *The European reactions*

By aspirations that *Histoire/Geschichte* achieved a European dimension in history education and can thus serve as a base for a European history textbook, the creators and politicians of France and Germany touched the sensitive string in the countries of, mainly, Western Europe. In other words, these aspirations stimulated somewhat heated debates about the future of a common European history education. To fully evaluate the successfulness of the Franco-German textbook, it is thus important to present the European view and repercussions on the textbook and its potential to become a forerunner of a common European history education.

Let one first look at the reaction of the East through the already discussed review of the textbook by Wojciech Rozskowski. It is clear from his review that Rozskowski finds the history of Eastern Europe to be scandalously neglected in the textbook. This neglect was already briefly discussed in the part 5.3.2.1.2, however in the part about the reaction of Europe to the textbook it needs to be returned to, as, obviously, the reaction of the East depends to a great

283 Frederic Lamaitre, ‘Malheureux manuel Franco-Allemand’.

284 Geiss, Interview APHG, Question 3.

285 Hubert Tison, Idem, Question 1.

extent on the presentation of Eastern European history in the textbook. When one looks at the textbook which was already marked as a bi-national history textbook, the reactions of the East can be anticipated. The review of Rozskowski can easily be denoted as a nationalistic refusal of the Franco-German history textbook. His review is filled with events in Polish history which are, according to him, missing in the Franco-German textbook. It can be argued that the historian goes too far in his claims, as the textbook can not possibly go deep into Polish history. However, there are countries that are not even mentioned in the textbook and it can justly be argued that the authors of the textbook go too far with their aspirations for a common European textbook, if the existing textbook omits, to a large extent, the history of much of Central and Eastern Europe. Probably they need to be reminded that Europe does not equal Western Europe; or France and Germany. According to Rozskowski:

‘The intention of creating a common French-German memory in young generation has become the entire world to the authors. Since in the first volume European integration takes so much space, why is there no information about problems of Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Greece or Cyprus, not to mention Eastern and Central Europe countries?’²⁸⁶

It is thus clear that unless the history of Central and Eastern Europe is included in the ‘history textbook of European history’, it will hardly win the attention and support of Eastern Europeans. Slovak historians are also skeptical. As Stanislav Minčev, historian and a head of the Museum of Slovak National Uprising, claims, that it is difficult to believe that all the European countries could find a common view of history.²⁸⁷ As a Slovak newspaper *Pravda* suggests, smaller European countries fear that their history could be marginalized in a common European textbook and prefer thus to keep history textbooks in ‘national hands’.²⁸⁸ Furthermore, if France and Germany keep on insisting on their special position in Europe and promoting it through history education, the real European dimension in history education has, undoubtedly, no future.

This claim is supported by the reaction of the West, which can, in its negativity and also national character, be compared to that of the East. In all likelihood, the German politicians went a step too far by urging to create a draft for a common European history textbook, which would help developing a common European identity across the European Union. Exact specifications for such a textbook were never created. What is known, though, is that it was supposed to be created

286 Rozskowski, ‘Opinion on French-German Secondary School History Textbook’, 15.

287 ‘Učebnica eurohistorie nenašla pochopenie’, *Pravda* Daily Newspaper, February 27, 2007, in: http://spravy.pravda.sk/ucebnica-eurohistorie-nenasla-pochopenie-fgl-/sk_domace.asp?c=A070226_184001_sk_domace_p23 (accessed 26-05-2011).

288 Idem.

by one historian from every country of the European Union and take *Histoire/Geschichte* as an example. It can be argued that the existing Franco-German history textbook, would have most probably remained without much attention and opposition from European countries, were it not for its ‘European aspirations’. ‘A common history textbook could contribute to a common European identity and knowledge about what is important for European culture and history’, said a spokesman for the German Education Ministry.²⁸⁹ Based on this claim and the proposition for *Histoire/Geschichte* to serve as an example by German Minister of Education, Annette Schavan, all ‘what is important for European culture and history’ was to come from France and Germany. It is evident why Graham Brady, the Tory European spokesman, described the proposition for a European history textbook as ‘*typical bureaucratic mission creep*’.²⁹⁰ ‘*The teaching of history is vitally important for any nation and particularly so for Britain, which has so much to be proud of. We should not under any circumstances lose control of our educational responsibilities*’, continued Brady.²⁹¹ Similarly, Nigel Farage, the leader of the UK Independence Party, used strong words when he asked: ‘*Do we really want our children being brainwashed by Eurocrats and politicians into believing a EU-style history where politicians saved the day? Euro-history will tell our children that peace in Europe has been kept by the EU, and that Britain was never a global power*’.²⁹² This kind of opinions does not seem surprising when one reads the following assertions in the textbook: ‘Through its willingness to co-operate with the third World, its attachment to multilateralism, its dialogue with other regions, the EU appears as a model on the international scene’.²⁹³

Could it thus be claimed that it is possible for the Franco-German history textbook to become more than just a support material for already existing textbooks in France and Germany, and a source gallery for documents and pictures? To answer this question, the convincing words of Rolf Wittenbrock can be used: ‘*A common European textbook is quite an utopist idea for the moment. But future initiatives in the field of bilateral or multilateral textbook production should take into consideration the aims, the difficulties and the outcomes of the French-German projects*’.²⁹⁴ Wittenbrock’s words are indeed legitimate as the fear of loss of sovereignty, as well

289 As quoted in: Bruno Waterfield, ‘Germany Wants EU History Lessons’, *The Telegraph*, February 22, 2007,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1543509/Germans-want-EU-history-lessons.html>

(accessed 20-12-2010).

290 Idem.

291 Idem.

292 Idem.

293 Idem.

294 Wittenbrock, Interview with Wittenbrock, Appendix 2, Question 20.

as national identity, are strengthened not only in politicians and intellectuals, but also in ‘ordinary people’. However, the Franco-German project remains the first of its kind and, as Wittenbrock also claims, a valuable experience gained by its creation should not be forgotten once Europe is ready to again write less nationalistic and more ‘neutral’ history or even search for a common view of historical events.

The mistakes and faults made by the creators of the textbook, as well as the governments of the two nations, have to be remembered as well. If one can learn best from mistakes that have been made, this textbook has enough to offer for learning. A textbook aspiring to become an example for a common European textbook should, without any doubt, not serve as a means for bi-national propaganda, omit history of so many parts of Europe in *European* history and express subjective beliefs and assertions. To once more quote Rozskowski:

‘The knowledge from the textbook will shape the student’s incorrect belief that the overcoming of French and German nationalisms has enabled Europe to solve its main problems and that these two countries are supposed to play a special role in Europe and their mission is to manage the affairs of the European Union and European historical memory. A student educated in such a way will be helpless not only in the European Union, but also in the surrounding world. Without knowing other European countries, student may even create frictions between them.’²⁹⁵

5.4 Conclusion

It can be argued that the analysis of a common Franco-German history textbook fixated more on the deficiencies of the textbook than its positive sides. The reason is obvious – researching how history education changed in relation to nationalism, requires a critical view, not a simplifying and all-accepting one. If one was to accept the creators’ claims about the textbook, Europe would be ready to create a common European textbook and it would have a great example to build it on.

The reality is, however, different. The Franco-German history textbook can be considered a project that is the biggest, the most influential and the closest to overcoming of nationalism – due to the bi-national authorship – in Europe ever. Still, nationalism is far from being overcome, the creation of stereotypical image of the ‘other’ between the two nations did not completely vanish, reconciliation happened at best in the ‘responsibility avoiding’ way and the international scene is indignant because of the thought of creating a European memory based on the example

²⁹⁵ Rozskowski, ‘Opinion on French-German Secondary School History Textbook’, 15.

set by the textbook. As discussed, the reasons for this fact are to be found in the content and the representation of the project.

The content of the textbook, alongside the fact that the closest it gets to overcoming nationalism is at a bi-national level, neglects the history of many European countries, as well as many important world historical events. This negligence is, understandably, disapproved of by Europe and the world. What is more, France and Germany cannot claim to have brought a revolutionary change into history education, considering the lack of multiperspectivity of European and world history and the obvious stressing of the importance of Franco-German relations in Europe. In the twenty first century, there are many more important historical facts that need to be part of European memory and, what is more, it needs to be acknowledged that the European Union, at the moment, consists of twenty seven, not two, countries.

It can be argued that this is probably a fact that French and German politicians are not ready to accept, as they went as far as to propose that the Franco-German history serves as an example for a 'European history textbook'. *Histoire/Geschichte* has since the beginning of its creation been a clear political initiative and it appears that it was pushed through by politicians to, once again, stress the significance of Franco-German relations on the European scene. Ironically, its political role can be considered a main reason for the lack of success of the project. It not only evoked feelings of mistrust and suspicion between the French and the German, blaming one another for political manipulation, but also strengthened national feelings of other European countries. These fear the loss of their position in European history and their national identities in the politically directed quest for replacing their historical extraordinarity by artificially created supra-national consciousness.

Chapter 6 In the direction of the East: Slovakia as a representative of Central Europe

In the following part of this research project, attention needs to be brought back to the already mentioned political and educational situation in Central and Eastern Europe. France and Germany gained their national status in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Slovakia, on the other hand, succeeded to do so only at the end of the twentieth. It can thus be presumed that the two centuries' difference would result in a belated need and desire for self-determination. However, it can also be argued that it, obviously, depends on the reasons for the large time gap – was it free-will and a missing national consciousness or was it limitation of freedom for self-determination? To provide thus the final and complete answer to the central research question, conclusions from the Franco-German case study need to be supported by a glance to the other side of Europe, as without it, no further conclusions can be drawn. The aim is to illustrate – by the example of historical and present development of a Central European nation – the direction of the development of history education and creation of historical memory.

6.1 Slovakia on the way to nationhood

'The Slavic nations occupy more territory than history.' – Johann Gottfried Herder ²⁹⁶

It can be argued that the history of Slovakia on the way to nationhood can be seen as a template repeating itself in the course of history. This template is of a nation, not being able to express itself through institutional self-determination, nor political self-government. There have been, however, significant efforts to create a national consciousness and identity through the language, history and literature.

'Slovaks lived for centuries as an ethnically distinct part of the Hungarian kingdom without an institutional structure for their own protection and promotion', argues Mariana Oravcova, a Slovakian philosopher specialized in analytical philosophy.²⁹⁷ In the Hungarian Kingdom two kinds of structure could be found: the heterogeneity of the kingdom and the individuality of the ethnic groups. The former was defined by the officially declared '*natio hungarica*' and Hungarian patriotism.²⁹⁸ The latter embraces, obviously, the individual character of the ethnic groups. In the case of Slovakia, as Oravcova claims, the consciousness of differing

296 J.G. Herder, *Zur Philosophie und Geschichte. Band II* (Berlin 1952) 485.

297 Mariana Oravcova, 'The Ethnic and Cultural Dimension of National Emancipation. The Evocation of the Slovak Nation', in: Tibor Pilcher and Jana Gašparíková, *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change. Series IV A. Eastern and Central Europe, Volume V: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I* (Washington D.C. 1994) 10.

298 Idem, 10.

from the Magyars and the Czechs survived the centuries under Hungarian domination. However, this differentiation did not develop into nationalism. The main reason can be found in the lack of political ambition and activity due to the efforts of authorities to preserve the heterogeneity of the kingdom.

It is here where the struggle between the Slovaks and the Hungarians started and, it can be argued, continues, in a way, until the present day. The Hungarians intended to keep the Slovaks as part of their kingdom, with no national self-determination. On the other hand, the Slovaks desired their self-determination, even though not immediately as a separate nation. This was expressed in Slovak literature since the eighteenth century, following the distinction between Czech, Slovakized Czech and Slovak languages among the Slavic languages. As one can read in Oravcova's essay, 'the literature expressed attitudes prevailing among Slovaks: pride in one's nation, advocacy of its interests, belief in its intrinsic excellence and the claim to an equal place among other nations'.²⁹⁹ Literature was the first means of connecting the present with the past, and to create thus the continuity and identity of national history, so important for the establishment and existence of a nation. Here the origins of discussed historical tradition, 'invented tradition', idealization and exaggeration, creation of myths and politicization of historical events have their roots. The history education followed in the nineteenth century.

Even though Slovaks had a special position within the Slavic nations – due to the efforts to cultivate Slovak language as a specific dialect of Slavic language and separate thus themselves from the Slavic nation – the national consciousness was overshadowed by Hungarian patriotism. Hungary was, also in literature, preferred to national pride. As Oravcova's research suggests, 'the idea of national equality was supported also by a historical reconstruction of the glorious past. All forms of this reconstruction [...] emphasized this historical legacy of the Slovak nation as its contribution to a common Hungary'.³⁰⁰ The situation did not change until the late eighteenth century when the problem of solving the position of the Slovak nation gained a dichotomous character.³⁰¹ In 1787, the first literary language based on the West Slovak dialect was codified and started to be used by Catholic intelligentsia. On the other side stood the Protestant intelligentsia who intended to bring the Czech language into use in Slovak literature and culture. At the same time there were two streams of the way of integration of Slovaks as a tribe within Slavs: one wished to see Slovaks as an independent tribe, the other one as a part of Czechoslovak tribe of Slavs.

299 Oravcova, 'Ethnic and Cultural Dimension of National Emancipation', 11.

300 Idem, 13.

301 Idem, 14-15.

The above discussed perceptions formed the history of the Slovak nation for the following two hundred years. Its relations to the Czech and Hungarian nations have been the main points in the long process of its creation and remain so in the present day in the form of complicated international relations.

6.1.1 The Slovaks versus the Magyars since the nineteenth century

'Slovaks, the people, differing from all their neighbors by their language, thought, customs and in other ways as well, have all the attributes of a nation, even though the state is not named for them and the country is multilingual; it is not a mass without history but an important element building the state.' – Anonymous³⁰²

The Slovak revival fully started in the nineteenth century with the activity of Anton Bernolák – a Slovak linguist and priest – and his followers. They advocated the cultural and national individuality of the Slovaks. Additionally, they manifested their beliefs by creating and putting to use a literary 'Bernolák's Slovak'. The stream of Slovak revival strengthened as a response to strong Magyarization – the Hungarian language was introduced as the only language of public administration and education; and the boundaries of the Magyar nation were to become those of Hungary. Writings justifying the existence of the Slovak nation strengthened, as anxiety among the non-Magyars grew. Without being noticed, Slovak nationalism developed in opposition to Hungarian nationalism.

The desire to separate from the Magyars was thus clear. The Slovaks no longer wished to be dominated, and started propagating the right to their own nation. As Ľudovít Štúr, the theoretician of language and nation, the founder of Slovak folk-emancipating nationalism and an executor of codification of the literary Slovak language, said:

*'By our enemies all of these are called Panslavs. That is, what the Madjars [Magyars, M.M] consider to be their highest virtue, love of their own nation, they condemn in us as our deadly sin. Does this virtue, then, belong only to one nation; is it impossible for others?'*³⁰³

It was indeed Štúr and his generation that gave life to Slovak nation-building. Slovak consciousness rose in response to strong Magyarization and, what is more, an attempt to

302 Published anonymously without place and date, included in J.V. Ormis, *O reč a národ. Slovenské národné obrany z rokov 1832-1848* (Bratislava 1973), in: Oravcova, 'Ethnic and Cultural Dimension of National Emancipation', 17.

303 As quoted in: J.V. Ormis, *O reč a národ. Slovenské národné obrany z rokov 1832-1848* (Bratislava 1973) 27.

introduce Magyar language to all Protestant churches and so Magyarize them. As Tibor Pichler, a philosopher and a director of Institute of Philosophy of Slovak Academy of Sciences, argues, this explains why Slovak Lutheran intelligentsia, led by Štúr, took the lead in the Slovak national movement and created a literary, confessionally neutral³⁰⁴ language, based on the Central Slovak dialect.³⁰⁵

In 1848, the first Slovak national program, *The Demands of the Slovak Nation* was drafted and introduced to the people of the nation. This document manifested the will to become a nation by putting forward a request for an equal national status – represented by a Slovak school system, the Slovak language and a separate national parliament. Despite the fact that the national aims were not reached in the nineteenth century due to the confessional division of the inhabitants of Slovakia, the codification of Slovak language was a great achievement of the nineteenth century and can be considered the base of the nation-building process.

The Slovak liberation struggle proceeded in a quite paradoxical form – an alliance with another nation into a Slavic aggregate, rather than in a form of creating of an independent Slovak nation. In other words, two ideas of the Slovak future developed: the idea of an independent nation but also the idea of the common Czechoslovak nation. This was nothing unusual for Central European nation-building processes. The Habsburg Empire was a heterogeneous form of social and political existence and thus reforms could not be started from a common ground.³⁰⁶ National groups therefore allied in the liberation struggles from the oppressing and dominating nation with an aim to achieve self-government and create self-identity.

6.1.2 Czecho-Slovak brotherhood

‘The time for deeds has come. It is necessary for us to determine whether we will continue going with the Hungarians or with the Czechs. Let us not ignore this question; let us say frankly, we are for the Czechoslovak orientation. The thousand-year marriage with the Hungarians was a failure; we must break up.’ – Andrej Hlinka, Slovak politician, 24 May 1918³⁰⁷

304 Until then, Czech was the language of the Protestant Church, while the Slovak language, based on Bernolák’s Slovak was the language of the Catholic Church.

305 Tibor Pichler, ‘The Idea of Slovak Language-based Nationalism’, in: Tibor Pilcher and Jana Gašpariková, *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change. Series IV A. Eastern and Central Europe, Volume V: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I* (Washington D.C. 1994) 35-39.

306 Idem, 41-42.

307 The proclamation of Andrej Hlinka, a Slovak politician – leader of Slovak People’s Party, in a session of the National party held in Martin on May 24 1918, As quoted in: Ján Bodnár, ‘Philosophy and National Identity in Slovakia’, in: Tibor Pilcher and Jana

Slovak brotherhood with the Czechs is another chapter in the Slovak history of nation-building, significantly shaping its development. Events towards the end of the First World War created opportunities for reforms and the gaining of sovereignty. As Ján Bodnár, a philosopher who specializes in contemporary western philosophy and the development of philosophical thinking in Slovakia, suggests, the ‘Slovak question’ started to appear in a new light in Czech circles. ‘Slovakia was no longer regarded as an oppressed brotherly nation that should be helped in its struggle against Magyar national chauvinism, but rather as a part of the Czech regions that had to be freed and attached to the Czech countries’.³⁰⁸ In 1918 the Czechs and Slovaks thus became one nation – officially. Even though the relation between the two was not as unsuccessful as the Slovak-Hungarian one, due to the mutual help to preserve the national identities in the time of Magyar oppression, it was also not one of an eternal affection. As Jana Balážová, a philosopher and the Secretary of Slovak Philosophical Institute, claims, the two nations joined in a common state with the aim of self-realization of both nations. However, there were great differences between the two nations: the Czech nation became the ruling nation, the Slovak nation, on the other side, did not attain an equal position and, what is more, its very existence was jeopardized – as claimed by Samuel Faltan, a prominent Slovak historian.³⁰⁹ There were several factors that negatively influenced the relation between the two nations joined into one. First of all, it was a doctrine of Czechoslovakism.³¹⁰ The idea had, at first, a positive role in the new nation. However, with time, it was used by the Czech nation to achieve hegemony in political and economic sphere and to ignore the ‘young’ national consciousness of the Slovaks.³¹¹ Slovakia became a weaker, underdeveloped ‘branch’ of the common nation of Czechs and Slovaks. Its role and position was diminished to an ethnicity with its own language, tradition and culture, however, not with its homeland, history and national identity.³¹² Furthermore, Czechoslovakism worsened the relations and attitudes between the Czech and Slovakian people. The Czechs saw the Slovaks as ‘chronic malcontent separatists and chauvinists’ and the Slovaks perceived the Czechs as

Gašpariková, *Language, Values and the Slovak Nation, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change Series IV A. Eastern and Central Europe, Volume V: Slovak Philosophical Studies, I* (Washington D.C. 1994) 31.

308 Ján Bodnár, ‘Philosophy and National Identity in Slovakia’, 30.

309 Samuel Faltan, ‘Slovenská otázka v Československu’, VPL (Bratislava 1968) 5, in: Jana Balážová, ‘Slovaks on the Road to National Self-determination’, 126.

310 Czechoslovakism is an ideological and political concept based on the idea of a united Czechoslovak nation, which consists of the Czechs speaking the Czech language, and Slovaks speaking the Slovak language. It was used as a main argument for the creation of Czechoslovakia after the First World War. It was abandoned after the Second World War.

311 Jana Balážová, ‘Slovaks on the Road to National Self-determination’, 127.

312 Idem, 127-128.

ignorant of interests and needs of the Slovak nation, feeling which prevails among Slovaks until the present.³¹³

Second ‘defect’ in the Czecho-Slovak relations was caused by the Second World War and the period that followed it. While under communist influence, Slovakia suffered more under the dictatorship of the Soviet Union due to the Czech advantage of Pragocentrism. This meant that Prague became the centre of the political, economic, spiritual and social sphere of Czechoslovakia. Pragocentrism was a Soviet solution to the potential ‘Czech problem’ – the possibility of the nation being tied to the West. In this way, Prague became a centre for Czech state and party representatives. The Slovak representation being under the greater influence of the USSR and persecution became of no importance and disappeared from the state and party affairs.³¹⁴

Soon after the Velvet Revolution of November 1989, the Czech premier Pithard in his speech on the fourth session of Czech national council, in words of Balazova, ‘admitted that the exasperation of some Czech people results from fundamental incomprehension of the Slovak nation’s efforts to attain its authentic national identity and recognized this to be a consequence of the traditional Czechoslovakistic and centrist attitude towards Slovaks deeply rooted in the Czech consciousness’.³¹⁵ This attitude has a very negative affect on the Slovaks, impelling them to search for an outer enemy responsible for all the misfortunes.³¹⁶ These negative experiences and perceptions of one another after nearly seventy years of co-existence resulted in a division of Czechoslovakia in 1993.

6.2 Slovakia after 1993 and reflection of its past in history education

The previous overview of the historical development of the Slovak nation was necessary to illustrate the base on which the national history of the country have been standing for centuries. This national history has been the part of Slovak history education since its development and it can be argued that it forms a large part of history education until the present day.

The reason lays in strengthened nationalism after 1993 when Slovakia after many failed attempts and struggles in its history, succeeded in becoming an independent nation. After long years of foreign domination and oppression, it got the chance to attain full emancipation and exercise its right to self-determination. As Eric J. Hobsbawm argued in his lecture on ethnicity

313 Jana Balážová, ‘Slovaks on the Road to National Self-determination’, 128.

314 Idem, 128.

315 Idem, 129.

316 Idem, 129.

and nationalism today, 'the specific reason for the wave of nationalist separatism in Europe today [1992] is historical'.³¹⁷ According to Hobsbawm's convincing claim, the issues in Europe around 1989 have their origins in 1917-1918, when the Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian Empires collapsed and were shattered into a multitude of successor states.³¹⁸ This can be claimed to be true because after the First World War the national consciousness of many of these successor states was developed but did not get the opportunity for full expression and self-realization. Hobsbawm's claim fits the case of Czechoslovakia perfectly. Both Czechs and Slovaks were offered freedom and national self-determination in a common state. This alliance corresponded with the plan of American President Wilson to divide Europe into ethnic-linguistic states, which would embody nations. A right to self-determination and an own state for every nation were some of the ideals of President Wilson's age. Although a praiseworthy idea, the division of Czechoslovakia in 1993 only proves that the alliance occurred only because of its advantage over the union with Hungary and was ended as soon as it became possible. What is more, with these divisions nationalism was, naturally, strengthened, as the newly created nations had to strengthen national consciousness and national identity in all the people of the nation, and so justify its existence. In the words of Benedict Anderson in the 1991 edition of his *Imagined Communities*:

'Almost every year the United Nations admits new members. And many 'old nations', once thought fully consolidated, find themselves challenged by 'sub'-nationalisms within their borders – nationalisms which, naturally, dream of shedding this sub-ness one happy day. The reality is quite plain: the 'end of the era of nationalism', so long prophesied, is not remotely in sight. Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time'.³¹⁹

In conclusion, in 1993 nationalism in Slovakia was strong, as a fulfillment of the right to exist as a sovereign nation could be realized for the first time in its history. Furthermore, it can be claimed that history education, undoubtedly, mirrors this 'nationalistic bloom'. This assertion is based on the conclusions, made previously in this research project, on the relation between nationalism, politics and history education. In the newly created nation which is in the process of self-determination and justification, it is natural for history education to stress the national importance, uniqueness and historical continuity, as well as take the chance to define 'the other'. In addition, it is even more so, with the recent efforts spread throughout Europe to 'defend particular national interests, and with, generally, [...] strong resistance to threats of losing national identity, self-

317 Eric J. Hobsbawm, 'Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today', *Anthropology Today*, Vol.8 No 1 (February 1992) 5.

318 Idem, 5.

319 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London 1991) 12.

determination, and national sovereignty. Both nations which are only struggling for their rights and those which are fully developed tend to defend their sovereignty', as the words of Balazova can be used to concisely describe the situation in Europe.³²⁰

6.2.1 Present Slovak history education

History education in Slovakia can indeed be characterized as national. Based on the previous discussion, and also based on the previously discussed Franco-German case, this should come as no surprise. Why is this claim legitimate? To compare the Franco-German case study and the case of Slovakia and its history education means comparing an effort for educational change in two, more than two centuries old, nations, busy for more than sixty years with mutual dialogues and a reconciliation process; and history education in the country that gained its sovereignty less than two decades ago. What is more, Slovakia 'was born' as a sovereign nation in a time of strengthened nationalism in Eastern Europe. All indicators thus point to one direction – the nationalistic character of history education in Slovakia.

The reality is indeed very close to this indication. First of all, it is an indisputable fact that national history forms a large part of history curricula in Slovakian primary and secondary education. There is not one year in the period of school education that national history would not be dealt with. What is more, the number of textbooks for national history is higher than the number of textbooks dealing with world history. In addition, the textbooks dealing with national history are much more appealing to pupils due to their illustration and documents supporting the explanatory text. The textbooks dealing with world history are printed in black and white and the only illustrations are small, black and white portraits of historical personages. It can be argued that such a textbook is much less appealing to pupils and, naturally, they will pay less attention to the topics presented in such a textbook. Furthermore, topics are touched upon very briefly; only the basic information is provided on the world history events. For instance, in the *Textbook of World History III* dealing with the twentieth century, one of the major historical events in the world history – the First World War – occupies only nineteen pages of small format.³²¹ In contrast, in the *Textbook of National History III*, dealing with the same period as the previously mentioned textbook of world history, 'Slovakia in the Years of the First World War' occupies twenty four pages of nearly double the format of the previous one.³²² This comparison shows that national history is dealt with in much greater depth than world history and European history. It can thus be

320 Jana Balážová, 'Slovaks on the Road to National Self-determination', 126.

321 Marian Damankos, *Svetove Dejiny III* (Bratislava and Presov 2005) 9-28.

322 Alena Bartlova and Robert Letz, *Dejepis. Národné dejiny III* (Presov 2005) 5-29.

concluded that, so far, initiatives in Slovakia to move towards European history do not exist. All Slovakian history textbooks are written by Slovak historians and pedagogues and they do not have any characteristics of the new trends in European education, such as multi-perspective of views, European dimension or space for individual interpretations. Slovak integration into the European Union, for instance, is mentioned by only one sentence.³²³ Even though the textbooks contain questions and documents supporting the explanatory text, answers to the questions can be found in the text and they do not invite individual interpretation or thinking.

The main characteristic of the textbook of national history can be argued to be the ‘heroization’ of the Slovak nation. The textbook clearly points to Hungarians, for instance, as the historical enemy and oppressor of the Slovak nation but does not go further in creating of stereotypical image of ‘the other’.

‘Bad life conditions, the lack of working opportunities and strong national oppression in Austria-Hungary forced Slovaks and inhabitants of other non-Hungarian nations to search work and new home abroad.’ – Extract from the Slovak textbook: *Dejepis. Národné dejiny III*³²⁴

‘The situation in Slovakia in the last two months of 1918 was extremely harsh. It was primarily complicated by the attitude of the Hungarian government which could not accept that Slovakia would belong to the CSR. It tried to use all the possible means - from diplomatic negotiation to military occupation – to gain time and achieve re-annexation of Slovak territory to Hungary.’ – From *Dejepis. Národné dejiny III*³²⁵

Similarly, the Czechs are not pictured as a nation that treated the Slovak nation as inferior and betrayed the ideals of equality in a common state, but are rather presented in a positive light. They are described as very close to the Slovaks:

‘In the end the strongest support was won by the project of a common state of Czechs and Slovaks who were very close to one another through language and culture, and traditionally good relations between them had deep roots in history’.³²⁶

The textbook does point to the Czech domination in the common state but it does so without actually blaming the Czechs. The facts stay facts without any exaggerated emotions, placing of blame or pointing of the finger.

323 Bartlova and Letz, *Dejepis*, 186.

324 Idem, 10.

325 Idem, 35.

326 Idem, 11.

This fact, quite atypical for a national history textbook is, however, balanced by the description of the Slovak nation and Slovak folk. It can be argued that both are described in an over-positive and strongly patriotic way. An extensive piece in the part on the First World War, for instance, is dedicated to the description of the difficult conditions and the bravery of Slovaks in the struggle for survival. An illustration pictures women working hard in the fields and a comment describes their bravery and sacrifices while taking up the position of men who had to fight in the war for liberation of their nation from Hungarian oppression.³²⁷ Equally, it describes the acts of men who had to fight on the side on those who they wished to be liberated from. These descriptions are supported by various ego documents illustrating the brave thoughts of Slovak soldiers and depicting the enemy.

‘Whatever was written and said, we aware Slovaks knew – mainly since France and England joined the war – that this war will be about us as well. We were walking with our head up and we could feel the blow of history. Austria-Hungary and Germany cannot win against the whole world! [...] I got engage to Karola Štefanovičová and took her pictures with me on the way to accompany me throughout the war – like that I joined the war of Austria-Hungary against those whom I expected to liberate my nation...’ – From the memoirs of Juraj Slávik, published in the source section of *Dejepis. Národné dejiny III*³²⁸

Throughout the textbook Slovakia is referred to as the ‘homeland’ and is always described highly emotionally.³²⁹ The entire national history is described as the struggle of Slovaks for liberation from foreign oppression or from a disadvantageous union. It is the ‘Slovakian thing’ that was always right to fight for, and Slovaks always did so honestly and bravely. The only negative point that was discovered in the textbook during the research is the treatment of the Jewish population, which was considered as pro-Hungarian during the Second World War³³⁰ and the deportations of Hungarians and Germans from the Slovak territory after the Second World War.³³¹

Despite the fact that the textbook is not in open opposition against the Hungarians and the Czechs – or any other world nation – in the present there are numerous controversies about the relations between Slovakia and its neighbors and its history education. The relations with the Czechs have always been less complicated than those with the Hungarians. It can be presumed

327 Bartlova and Letz, *Dejepis*, 8.

328 Juraj Slávik, *Moja Pamäť – Živá kniha* (New York) 241, in: Bartlova and Letz, *Dejepis*, 9.

329 Bartlova and Letz, *Dejepis*, 12.

330 Idem, 89-93.

331 Idem, 121-122.

that pupils are familiar with the conception of the Czech nation considering itself superior to the Slovakian one, as the idea is widely-spread throughout Slovakia and it is quietly rooted the Slovakian view of the Czechs. It can, however, be argued that no real hate exists between the ‘brothers’, as Czechs and Slovaks call themselves until the present day.

The Hungarian historical oppression, as well as its repeated efforts to re-annex Slovak territory, or at least parts thereof, and the problems with the Hungarian minority on the territory of the Slovak Republic contribute to bad Slovak-Hungarian relations and create the major problematic issue in Slovak international relations. It can also be argued that these relations stand as the biggest obstacle on the way to a European dimension in Slovakian history education because the anti-Hungarian nationalism is so strong that, as Ján Slota, the leader of the Slovak National Party, put on record, it will still for a long time be impossible for the two nations to achieve reconciliation in history education. Indeed, it appears that the mutual perceptions and views of history are too different to be united.

There were, however, efforts to do so. In 2007 prime ministers of Slovakia and Hungary presented, at the meeting of the Slovak and Hungarian governments, an idea to create a common history textbook for Slovakia and Hungary. The idea was based on the Franco-German project and on the fact that, as a member of the European Union, Slovakia had to start searching for solution of the ‘Hungarian issue’ – a problem of Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and its enmity towards Slovaks and vice versa. The textbook was supposed to be written by both Slovakian and Hungarian historians and juxtapose the Slovak and Hungarian perspectives next to each other. However, the critics did not agree with the idea of presenting two perspectives, but rather demanded that a common view of historical event is created. As Viliam Kratochvíl – a historian and one of former creators of an intended Slovak-Hungarian project – explained the difficulties with creating the textbook: *‘According to the principle of multi-perspectivity, it is necessary to show to pupils that history is not black-and-white. Our critics, however, claim that children need to hear only one truth’*.³³² Furthermore, as Štefan Šutaj from the Slovak Academy of Sciences claimed, a real team of the Slovak and Hungarian historians working on the project never existed and the Committee of Slovak and Hungarian historians has been solving different tasks than a common history textbook.³³³ As a result, texts that were created by this committee are of a scientific nature and, according to Šutaj, were totally unsuitable for creating a textbook for pupils.

332 *Pravda Daily Newspaper*, ‘Len Slovensko-Madarsky Dejepis je Problem’, 27th February 2007, in: http://spravy.pravda.sk/len-slovensko-madarsky-dejepis-je-problem-fi1-/sk_domace.asp?c=A070227_082843_sk_domace_p23#ixzz1VHkTRLEQ (accessed 26-05-2011).

333 Idem.

With his opinion agreed also, then, Minister of Education Ján Mikolaj, who said for TA3 television channel that for pupils to get taught, a textbook, not a scientific monography, would have to be created.³³⁴

Furthermore, some historians that were supposed to write the textbook put on record that the Slovak government tried to apply a pressure on what and how should be written in a the textbook. Some authors even had to leave the team of Slovak historians working on the textbook because of the involvement of politics in the project.³³⁵

A common textbook thus remained on the level of discussion. It was supposed to be finalized in 2009 but the above discussed pitfalls, together with still strong nationalism on both sides, restrain Slovakia and Hungary from making a step towards each other and from trying to accept the view of the other. Moreover, the textbook did not get the necessary support of the Ministries of Education of either country. The number of pupils who are presented the stereotypical image of ‘the other’, in both Slovakian and Hungarian schools, is thus still rising and the views of historical events keep on differing.

Very interesting was the reaction to the Franco-German educational project partly completed in 2006. In 2007 an article with the heading *Hungaro-Slovak history textbook: keep dreaming!* appeared in an online magazine of ‘Eurogeneration’.³³⁶ The article illustrates some topics that cause division between Slovak and Hungarian views and, so far, make the common history education project a distant dream. Obviously, the most difficult aspect to overcome are the myths created in the histories of both countries. One can, for instance, hear absolute extremes from two sides of one border, such as that ‘Hungarians are wild tribes who oppressed Slovaks for thousand years’ or that ‘Slovaks should better shut their mouths because they originate in 1993 and before nobody ever heard anything about some Slovaks’.³³⁷ Both nations present to pupils their own vision of the truth, but a common view of historical events is missing. These nationalistic interpretations of events in history were created to fit the territorial claims, the continuity and deep roots of history, blaming or creating of the stereotypical images of ‘the other’. The example of the first Vienna Award of 1938 represents the first case. It returned to Hungary the territory from present day Slovakia lost in 1920 by the, for Hungarians painful and until the

334 Archive of TA3 television channel, http://www.ta3.com/sk/reportaze/121599_slovensko-madarska-ucebnica-dejepisu-zrejme-nebude (accessed 26-05-2011).

335 Idem.

336 Balint Ablonczy, ‘Hungaro-Slovak history textbook: Keep dreaming!’, in: <http://www.cafebabel.co.uk/article/2821/hungaro-slovak-history-textbook-keep-dreaming.html> (accessed 26-05-2011).

337 <http://mistrik.blog.sme.sk/c/269456/Bude-niekedy-slovensko-madarska-ucebnica-dejepisu.html> (accessed 01-07-2011).

present day unforgettable, Treaty of Trianon.³³⁸ This award was annulled in 1947 but it changes nothing about the fact that it is viewed by Hungarians as ‘the return of the southern-Uplands to Hungary’ and by Slovaks as ‘temporary Hungarian invasion and loss of southern Slovakia’ until the present day.³³⁹ It is one of the topics where reconciliation is difficult. Furthermore, Hungarian textbooks tend to omit non-Hungarian personages important in Hungarian history or tend to misinterpret their role or origin. As Barna Ábrahám, a lecturer at the Department of History of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, suggests: ‘A Hungarian textbook could call a lord from County Liptó (today the Liptovsky region in Slovakia), a Hungarian noble. But he would have debated in the county council in Latin or Slovak. He probably barely spoke Hungarian!’³⁴⁰ Slovakian textbooks, on the other hand, tend to treat the present borders as if they were the historical borders. In other words, the textbooks refer to ‘Slovakia’ when talking about the sixteenth century. However, Slovakia, as a sovereign state called ‘Slovakia’, did not exist until the twentieth century. As Balint Ablonczy, a political journalist claims: ‘Hungarian experts see it as faking of history’.³⁴¹

There are thus still many problems standing in the way to a common history education in the two Central European enemy nations. The two greatest are the unwillingness to accept the view of history of the other and still strongly prevailing nationalism.

6.3 Conclusion

The history of Slovakian nation-building is long and full of difficulties and misfortunes. After the liberation from under the Hungarian domination and oppression, Slovakia became for seventy years a part of a nation where it was, once again, considered the weaker and inferior part. All these experiences were reflected in a strengthened nationalism after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which led to the division of Czechoslovakia and the creation of a sovereign Slovak nation. After centuries of national struggle, in 1993 Slovakia achieved what is considered a right of every nation: self-determination and self-governance.

Slovak nationalism is, naturally, reflected in history education. Finally gaining the right to self-determination, the ‘story’ of the many hardships on the way to sovereign nation has a firm place in such an important formative element in one’s development. Slovakian textbooks are not full of the images of ‘the other’, in this case, Hungarians or Czechs. It rather concentrates on

338 <http://mistrik.blog.sme.sk/c/269456/Bude-niekedy-slovensko-madarska-ucebnica-dejepisu.html> (accessed 01-07-2011).

339 Balint Ablonczy, ‘Hungaro-Slovak history textbook: Keep dreaming!’.

340 As quoted in: Balint Ablonczy, ‘Hungaro-Slovak history textbook: Keep dreaming!’.

341 Balint Ablonczy, ‘Hungaro-Slovak history textbook: Keep dreaming!’.

heroizing its own history, its own nation and people. It is very thorough in illustrating the misfortunes and the bravery of Slovaks throughout many centuries, many more than Slovakia can actually claim to exist.

Such faking of history, as one of the examples, is opposed by the Hungarian side and is one of the reasons for the present impossibility to find reconciliation through the history education. There are, of course, more reasons for this fact. First of all, it is the already mentioned nationalism which is, naturally, strong after long years of not being able to fully express itself. Slovakia is a very young nation and as such needs to rebel against its old enemy and denier of freedom. There are events in the history of the two countries that both of them simply cannot accept and overlook. This old enmity is strengthened by the problems of the present. Among the gravest is the problem of Hungarian minority in Slovakia. The Hungarian Party requires for the official language to become Hungarian, for the children to learn history from Hungarian books and for all the inscriptions in the towns and villages to be in Hungarian rather than Slovakian. Slovak side has a simple respond to such claims: In Slovakia, in Slovakian.

Representatives of the two countries meet occasionally to try to find solutions to these problems. However, these seem to be impossible to find because neither of the two wants to make a step towards the other. Everything seems to be based on the view historical events and its representation from both sides. Unless a dialogue between the two nations is started and 'the other' perspective accepted, there will likely come no change in Slovak-Hungarian relations and consequently no change in history education in these Central European countries. Until the present day, pupils of both nations do not have any other option than to learn the nationalistic, enmity creating versions of history.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

In a time of great changes connected with globalization and European unification, nationalism is an important and interesting topic to research. The reason for this is the fact that among the unifying trends, the divisive element, such as nationalism, should not have a place. Its strength or weakness was, in this research project, researched through history education – an element, which for the past few centuries – as discussed in the theoretical chapter on nationalism – played an important role in the fostering of national consciousness and creation of a national identity. The main aim of this thesis was to discover whether the role and position of history education changed, or whether it is still mainly a tool for the strengthening of nationalistic stereotypes and prejudices. The answer for the central research question - *How has the role of history education been changing in the nations of a politically uniting Europe since the 1960s, in relation to the choice between either the strengthening of national consciousness or promoting European unity?* – was searched through a case study of Franco-German co-operation in a common history textbook and a case study of Slovakia and how its relations with the Czechs and, mainly, Hungarians reflected in the history education.

To understand the idea of nationalism and the importance of history education for this phenomenon, which spread throughout the world in the nineteenth and the twentieth century, it was important to study its aspects and the ways it gained its immense power to shape the minds of people for more than two centuries. Nationalism can be understood as a combination of spiritual and political principles; a combination of subjective and objective elements. Spiritual principle is the bond between the people of one nation, the feeling of brotherhood and belongingness to one nation, to a group of people that one shares certain characteristics with. This ‘imagined community’ creates bonds with a nation so strong that its members would give their life for the nation. The spiritual bond is reflected in one’s pride for its nation, thoughts of uniqueness and also a certain superiorizing of the other nation and creation of enmities through creating the image of ‘the other’.

All these aspects of the spiritual dimension of one’s connection with a nation were triggered, among other factors, by political involvement. At the ‘dawn’ of nationalism it was important for the leaders of nations to awaken the nationalistic spirit in the people of a nation, so they would be willing to fight and die for it. Later on the importance of political involvement did not diminish, as nationalism always served certain political aims - to elevate the international importance of a nation, fight to expand the territory of a nation, explain the discrimination or oppression of another – superior – nation, etcetera. The spiritual and political principle thus influence and enforce each other. One of the means how the political will for fostering of

nationalistic feeling has been communicated to people is national history presented through history education.

History education has since its development in the nineteenth century been one of the most important factors in accounting for the development of a national identity. National history has many times been invented or exaggerated to fit the nationalistic agenda and to create in people the sense of having deep roots in history and connection to a heroic past and ancestors that did many brave and extraordinary deeds to attain and maintain the unity, autonomy, identity and territory of a nation. In history education one can see a great opportunity to instill such beliefs in the minds of pupils in the formative period of their development and so make sure that they grow up to believe that certain nations have to be 'othered' and looked upon as an enemy while 'our' nation is the most reasonable and the superior one.

A good case study to illustrate the conclusions made on the relation between nationalism and history education is the case of France and Germany and their mutual steps to reconciliation. France and Germany are two nations marked by a mutual enmity rooted in almost two centuries of historical conflicts. These two historically important players on the international scene, stood since the beginning of the nineteenth century always on the opposite sides. Since the French Revolution and its ideals shifted from the world-wide enlightenment to territorial claims of the French leader, nationalism in both countries has been developing in opposite directions, causing an enmity which was believed to be 'set in stone'. In fact, German nationalism developed as a reaction to the French one and with the War of Liberation of 1814-15 triggered the long period of mutual hate and creation of stereotypical images of the evil other. These had their firm position in history education of both countries and, without a doubt, caused its highly oppositional character, mainly in the period from 1870 to 1940. History education in this period, bordered by the Franco-Prussian War and the beginning of the Second World War, was designed by antagonism and conflicts. School books of both countries were written in order to claim their nationalisms and borders which resulted from previous wars.

Research proved that the situation in history education in the two nations changed since the 1950s when they started meeting annually in order to rework their history interpretations. The reason for this change can be searched in political advantage of the co-operation between the two nations over a continuous antagonism. France had to realize that economically strong Germany cannot be excluded from the European matters and chose for the path of co-operation. The vision of the Franco-German couple to stand in the lead of Europe soon became true and spiritual division between the two needed to be bridged. Consequently, the paths to reconciliation through history started to be searched. In 2006, sixty years of dialogues brought fruit in the form of a

common history textbook. This textbook claimed to be a miracle due to the long enmity between the two nations and had immense aspirations of becoming a base for a future common European textbook based on multi-perspective of views it offers and its focus on European dimension in history education.

It can be claimed that this history textbook certainly fulfilled at least one of the claims its authors present. It is indeed a great innovation in the field of history education, as France and Germany were the first nations to have created a textbook where the viewpoints of one another were disposed and where at least some space was created for independent opinion and judgment. However, it can also be argued that it is actually all that there is. A widely supported presumption, that if these two nations could achieve reconciliation through history education any nations in Europe can achieve it too, turns out to be wrong. There are several reasons supporting this argument. First of all, what the two nations achieved is not reconciliation in history but an ability to juxtapose two points of view. That, however, does not mean that they also accept these points. The common history textbook consists of points of view of France and Germany but does not provide a universal truth for the pupils. It does not point, for instance, to the points in which the Germans were wrong and points in which the French were wrong and does not show acceptance of the point of view of the other. It only presents the points of view and, as the authors claim, leaves a space for own interpretations. However, it can be argued that the material and explanatory text provided is not sufficient for a pupil to create a valuable interpretation and judgment. Furthermore, the textbook does not contain the points of view of other European countries. It is only an exchange of French and German interpretations. What is more, the textbook neglects the history of Europe and the world and instead provides mainly a Franco-German history. This is so even though the authors claimed it to be a Franco-German history textbook of European and world history, not a history textbook of Franco-German history.

Another important point is that despite sixty years of mutual dialogues, certain issues were simply avoided. It is very easy to say that a revolutionary change in history education happened when the difficult issues in history have simply not been dealt with. What change can then be expected from, for instance Slovakia and Hungary, whose century long enmity has yet not tried to be reconciled through mutual dialogues? The Slovaks and the Hungarians indeed also have an unfortunate history of enmity, even though different than the French and the Germans. While the two Western European nations were sovereign nations since the beginning of their mutual conflicts, Slovakia gained its sovereignty and the right to self-determination less than two decades ago, after another seventy years long marriage, this time with the Czechs. It can be argued that if France and Germany in their situation did not succeed with complete and open

reconciliation, it is not surprising that the Central or Eastern European countries – that recently gained their sovereignty and are thus characterized by strong nationalistic character aimed at self-determination – are not able to do so either.

The political character of the Franco-German history textbook is of immense significance for the perceptions of the textbook by the French and the Germans, but also the rest of Europe and the world. It is also the main point from which the conclusions about the changes in history education in Europe can be drawn. The political role of the Franco-German textbook is the main reason for its failure to achieve its goals. The reason can be found in the previous discussion on the relation between nationalism and history education. As concluded, history education has always been a tool in the hands of politicians to manipulate the people of a nation. The political character of the common Franco-German history textbook creates precisely the same fears and suspicions in the people. In France it is believed that the textbook is a manipulation from the German side and in Germany it is the French in the role of manipulator. What is more, the political function can be seen as the only reason why the textbook was even created. It is supposed to symbolize the Franco-German friendship and highlight the extraordinariness and importance of Franco-German co-operation for Europe. This was true in the 1950s but not anymore in the twenty first century and the inability of France and Germany to give up the superior position, this time through history education, causes not only the failure of their common textbook on an international scene but also tetchy reactions against them. One can argue that these are closer to strengthening of nationalism than to its overcoming.

In addition, due to its political function, it can be claimed that the textbook has an obvious nationalistic character. Only this time it is bi-nationalism, or supra-nationalism based on the Franco-German leadership, that is in the game. This fact upsets the rest of Europe and turns the politicians of other countries of the European Union against the idea of a common European history textbook and to fostering of European consciousness. The reason can be searched in the fear of loss of own national identities to a European identity artificially created by manipulation and following of political aims of, in this case, France and Germany.

In Slovakia, a respond to the Franco-German educational project was a discussion about a possibility of creating a common Slovak-Hungarian history textbook. Even though this idea got some positive reactions from the side of Slovak people, the political scene was not ready to make such step. The main reason is a disability of both sides to start the dialogues and to make effort to exchange and understand the interpretation of history of the other. So far, the division is too great to try to melt it into one common interpretation. What is more, as mentioned, Slovakia only recently got a chance to self-determination and the nationalism that was dormant in the nation for

long years can finally be fully expressed. And Slovaks, obviously, are making sure to be loud and thorough in its expression. Certainly enough to find an echo on the Hungarian side.

However, it cannot be concluded that due to the discussed failures and bad successes, the situation in history education did not change since the 1950s. Indeed, the changes are great. From the purely one-sided interpretations of history full of stereotypical images of the other, fostering the enmity between the nations, Europeans set off on the path of search for some kind of a common way. The most important fact in the pool of initiatives, changes and bad success is that the people, the same as representatives of nations and Europe realize that the change in the nationalistic interpretations of history has become a necessity. Those who try need only to be careful not to disturb the fragile security that national identities provide in the insecure time of changes. It needs a full realization that history education is not to be politicized and that the national and, for instance, European identity do not exclude each other but can, on the other hand, quite peacefully co-exist.

APPEDIX 1

Franco-German relations

APHG

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THE LAUNCHING OF THE LAST IN A SERIE OF FRANCO-GERMAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

BERLIN, Dec. 13, 2010

INTERVIEW WITH RAINER BENDICK, PETER GEISS, RAINER RIEMENSCHNEIDER AND ROLF WITTENRROCK ABOUT THE FRANCO-GERMAN HISTORY MANUAL

directed by Hubert Tison *

HG: Why did you choose to launch the German version of the third and last (actually the first) book in the collection of three volumes of Franco-German history textbook at the Senate of Berlin on the 13th of December 2010 attended by leading German and French authorities , the world press, publishing, education and pedagogy? What is the meaning and scope? Why French and German politicians? Are they interested in this book? Is it to say that this book has an official stamp?

Rolf Wittenbrock: The first two books were launched respectively in 2006 and 2008 – in the range of 2 years. It was therefore adequate for the last volume to be presented in 2010. But there is another reason: the German federal system provides that the mandate of responsibility for cultural contacts with France expires after 4 years. However, the Mayor of Berlin Klaus Wowereit, who took this position in 2007, wanted to demonstrate to the binational public that one of the flagship projects of his mandate of plenipotentiary – the binational history manual – has been accomplished before the end of the exercise of this mandate in December 2010. Besides, I will not give you the official title by the Mayor of Berlin in its binational mission: he was the "Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany for Cultural Affairs under the Treaty on Franco-German" . I think you'll find very few Germans who have never heard or used this title! It is true that politicians in both countries have followed closely and with great sympathy the progress of this book, because for them it is a unique project which is sort of the cornerstone of the Franco-German reconciliation. But their moral support for this project depends, of course, also their dual cultural sensitivity and the place they give to Franco-German relations.

But this moral support can in no way be seen as an official stamp. No member of the editorial team or steering committee would agree to any intervention on the part of politicians! Even the most suspicious minds in our two countries will have to admit that the vision of George Orwell described in his novel "1984" has, fortunately, remained a pure fiction.

HG. Could you tell how exactly did the editorial staff work in conjunction with the Scientific Committee? What specifications were the editors obliged to follow?

Rolf Wittenbrock: The steering committee was appointed in 2003. A feasibility study had been carried out before any specifications were written. Then, a tandem of two binational publishers, who had applied for the creation of binational manual, was selected by the steering committee. Then Klett Publishing House and Nathan formed a binational team of editors, which in turn created a team of authors. The Scientific Committee has never intervened in these people matters. But it did ensure that the methodological and didactic stipulations were broadly respected. Regarding the contents of three volumes, the committee has also accepted many changes when they seemed sensible, because the specification were not considered a Bible. We could see that since the appointment of editors and authors, the committee had rather an advisory role. Editorial and redactional responsibilities were for the two publishing houses.

HG. Who is this version for in Germany? Can it be chosen by students of the Europepan classes in France and AbiBac classes in Germany?

Peter Geiss: In 2003, the Franco-German Youth Parliament, gathered at the 40th anniversary of the Elysee Treaty, called for "the introduction of a history textbook with the same content for both countries to reduce prejudice caused by mutual ignorance ..." (Final Declaration on the Future of Franco-German Relations, January 2003). It is therefore not a manual on Franco-German relations, but a classic textbook that can be used in all classes of a high school and the Gymnasium. It is true that demand is particularly strong in European and AbiBac classes, where the version in the language of the partner is used. But it seems that gaining of fresh perspective and binational comparison will also enrich the teaching of history outside the Franco-German context. According to Marc Bloch, the comparison leads the historian to examine the history of his own country from a new "questionnaire" (term used by Marc Bloch in his lecture on a comparative history of European societies, the International Congress of Historical Sciences, Oslo 1928, on the relationship between this text and our key project, see the article by Pierre Monnet cited at the end of the interview) which he would not have been able to develop merely by a purely national perspective. If German students compare the situation of the Weimar Republic to the Third Republic in the inter-war period, they will find parallels, but also specificities to why the first German democracy has failed. They will see for example that the Social Democrats and the German Communists never got to overcome their conflicts to deal with Hitler, while the Popular Front has helped stabilize the French democracy in the 1930s. Even a student who is not at all interested in the history of France would benefit from this comparison. As for French students, they will better understand why France has become the centralized country by comparing the political structures of the French monarchy to the Holy Roman Empire. Unlike the kingdom of Louis XIV, it is not a coherent state, but a territorial unit, more or less sovereign.

HG. This latest release closes a cycle for of textbooks for the last three years of the Gymnasium. Is it an appreciation for the editorial team of publisher Klett? Why was it so expected in Germany? When will this volume be published in France?

Rainer Riemenschneider: I understand that the completion of the work is a source of great satisfaction for the editorial team of the German publisher Klett. Regarding the scientific committee, I think I speak for all and everyone, both in France and Germany, saying that we are pleased to have led the project to fruition. Of course, each of us is aware of the shortcomings that such an adventure necessarily involves, remember that we pioneered! When we worked for seven years for the success of the business, we know the pitfalls and you become modest, I mean realistic. Precisely because the German public has felt and seen – with the first two volumes – something new and innovative was born, the third volume was eagerly awaited.

The French members of the Committee: Jean-Louis Nembrini, Yves Beauvois, Dominique Borne, Gérald Chaix, Jean-Pierre Dubois, Etienne Francois, Pierre Monnet, Yves Poncelet, Marcel Spiss Michel Tarpinian. The German members: Stefan Krawielicki, Michael Ott, Christoph Blosen Christine Clos, Rainer Seider, Susanne Brunner, Wilfried Burger, Stefan Krimm, Ursula Lange, Horst Möller, Rainer Riemenschneider, Andrea Schwermer, Rudolf von Thadden, Rolf Wittenbrock.

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HG. What is the procedure for validation by the states? Do they exert a kind of censorship?

Rainer Bendick: We must weigh the words. Censorship involves value judgments. Censorship is a known method of totalitarian regimes which force the public to follow one political orientation. German history has seen these processes and therefore it seems inappropriate to talk about censorship to describe the methods of validation of textbooks by 16 ministers of education. Myself, I have severely criticized these methods, also in reference to the work of Ferdinand Buisson (see "Staatlich kontrollierte Schulbuchzulassung - ein Beitrag zur 'Qualitätssicherung, der ein oder Lehrwerke Reflex auf deutsche Erfahrungen spezifisch?" in *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 49.1998, Heft 12, S. 754-760.), because it is government that decides whether a textbook should be used in class. But it does not decide alone. It asks for the opinions of experienced teachers. They must verify that the manual complies with the program and the direction of teaching methodology. While criticizing the system, we must know its origins are in the Federal Republic. Until early 1950s it was the occupation

forces who have guarded, rightly, teaching in Germany. Since then, the ministries of education are the caregivers. Do not forget that a history teacher in the 1950s was trained before 1945.

HG. How have the German and French teams worked together? How long was the gestation of the book? What barriers were there? Differences of interpretation? Difficulties in translation?

Rainer Riemenschneider: The Scientific Committee, who initially acted as a steering committee, developed the specifications in 2004, after preparatory work on the German side since the fall of 2003. These specifications are based on content and methodological framework from which the editorial teams have crafted the three volumes of the manual. The specifications attempted to create a synthesis of the imperatives of French and German programs. Their writing took much time and effort on both sides. Rolf Wittenbrock said that these specifications were not considered a "bible" and he is right, only without their existence, the Franco-German textbook would have been unthinkable. There were no major obstacles, but I felt over the years that on the German side, the hard work had remained constant, whereas on the French side we felt sometimes hesitation.

When the project began, there was a controversy over the design of the handbook: should it be a textbook of Franco-German history or a Franco-German history textbook of European and world history? The shade was great, and it is the latter formula, which was also proposed by the Youth Parliament, which finally prevailed. Another hesitation was felt in the French editorial team – it seemed to have doubts about the validity of the transnational manual, but it may be a subjective impression on my part.

Different interpretations exist on both sides and it would be surprising indeed if there had been none. These differences, we have not hidden or skipped, but they are contained in three volumes, including last chapter, under the heading of Viewpoints. This part is extremely valuable because it educates students on how the Other sees a particular historical question. - Difficulties in translation, there were large numbers. It is inevitable to face such a complex matter when dealing with a textbook. Therefore meticulous proofreading of translations, chapter by chapter, by members of the Scientific Committee, has proved indispensable.

HG. What methods have been advocated by the authors? Is there a ‘marriage’ between French teaching methods – more knowledge and lecture based, and German – based on the documents and debate in class?

Peter Geiss: Initially, it seemed very difficult to marry the two educational cultures. However, advancing in our work together, we realized that the French and German methodological approaches are complementary to one another. It is therefore possible to create a real appreciation for education in both countries by combining them. On one hand, the autonomy of the student highlighted in the German system may well be supplemented by the precision of methodological tools and the acquisition of correct knowledge required in France. On the other hand, a independency of the student seems likely to prepare him to use his skills outside the classroom, for example at university in the professional world or in politics. By bringing students to make personal judgments based on logical argumentation and precise knowledge, it achieves a synthesis of the best traditions of French and German: the knowledge and logical rigor – without which the decision is purely subjective – and the relationship with the individual today – without which the study of history remains an abstract exercise.

HG. What is the treatment of illustrations (pictures, photographs, cartoons?)

Peter Geiss: The image occupies an important place in the Franco-German textbook. This, probably French, contribution was greatly appreciated by students and professors in Germany. In recent years, German historians attach greater importance to the image as a historical source, but it is rare that a textbook publisher devotes two pages to the analysis of a painting reproduced in large format. Regarding the emphasis on image, the Franco-German textbook is very close to the French educational system, but we tried to avoid providing interpretation legends too explicit to enable students to ‘read’ images themselves based in the documentation accompanying iconography.

HG. Young German students have, at a roundtable of 13 December 2010, expressed their taste for the documents and even regretted they were not longer. In France there is a tendency to return to the narrative (scientific) and the decrease in container document. French German manual goes thus against the current? Tell us about the documents.

Peter Geiss: The negative side of the narrative is that it is a 'all done' interpretation – a sort of "master narrative" – while the study of documents allows the student to participate in the construction of meaning of history. On the other hand, the German education tends to overestimate the analytical abilities of pupils by confronting them with complex documents that would pose problems even for students. It seems necessary to provide benchmarks as part of a story that avoids, wherever possible, value judgments and biases. This story should simply provide students with historical information that will enable them to study documents. As for the scientific story, it is essential that students become familiar with this kind of text, but it should not be presented as expressing objective truths. That's why we've integrated historiographical issues into the Franco-German textbook. They contain different scientific interpretations about a historical phenomena. These files enable students to understand that scientific interpretations should not be confused with reality itself, but that they help us form our own judgment of historical fact. It seems to me that the study of history must always go through the recognition of plurality of possible narratives.

HG. Could you give some examples of comparative history made in the manual? But also the method of two points of view initiated by Jules Isaac?

Rainer Bendick: A highlight among many of the manual pages are the "viewpoints". Like the method dear to Jules Isaac, it puts the French and German interpretations face to face. Students are thus aware of the national point and at the same time there is relativity in this way to watch the national past. The comparative history is not confined to the field of interpretation. A volume to be published in March 2011 parallels the Edict of Nantes and the religious peace of Augsburg. Students learn here how the same phenomenon - the wars of religion - has been solved in France and Germany. At the same time they learn the different political structures of both countries. And final blocks are cutting a piece of comparative history. Themes - war and peace, the state and religion, the imperial order - are followed throughout the chapters of the manual, so you can make comparisons.

HG. Is manual elitist in its demands? Is it reserved for students in special classes?

Rainer Bendick: No, definitely not. Myself I teach history and French at a 'evening high school'. It is an establishment that addresses young adults who have not had the chance to spend the time in the primary school. My students do not come from bourgeois circles, quite the contrary. And they love working with the Franco-German textbook because the textbook unifies what are the strengths of the French and German teaching. There is a very clear structure, text copyright well measured. That is the contribution of the French side. But the manual also contains elements that allow the German educational orientation toward student activities, which do not simply repeat what the teacher said. And most importantly, the book adopts always two points of view. Events known in principle become much more interesting. Students, even the weak students, discover what is the story and they apply it with much greater commitment. So it's not an elitist manual but a manual that can engage students with its unique approach.

HG. How was the handbook received in Germany?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Upon the release of the first volume, the media and the general public were very interested in this book, which indeed had a pioneering role in the history of the teaching of history not only in Europe. Thus, the sales figure was more than encouraging. At the German high schools, the introduction of the manual, however, was complicated by the fact that the publication of textbooks has been reversed from the normal process. It was indeed difficult to ask students to buy a new manual if they had already acquired a manual of another collection. But this problem is now solved, because from this year on the entire collection of the manual is available.

The surveys of students and teachers showed that German pupils greatly appreciate the varied presentation of documents and the interactive aspect of the manual. The majority of the teachers sees an undisputed gain in this manual, as it provides access to two national galleries of graphic material. They also appreciate the non-doctrinal aspect of interpretations, because often the pages of "viewpoints" can help students understand that there is no one absolute truth in the history lesson. University historians have also made a great echo on the new binational manual. There have been many reports that the majority welcomed the arrival of this book extraordinary.

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HG. Can we consider that the achievement of these three books is the result of Franco-German talks on the content of textbooks conducted since the 1930's until 2004, between APHG (formerly the Society of Teachers of History and Geography), the Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig, and the Society of Teachers of German history?

Rainer Riemenschneider: The realization of Manuel Franco-German is the culmination of several factors, including the Franco-German talks for the revision of textbooks. They are one component, albeit an important one. These talks, which began in difficult international political conditions, have shown the way forward for the science of history and schooling in our two countries through "handling" of problems that we have opposed. Other structures of dialogue followed, such as the Franco-German Committee for contemporary history, etc.. Besides, participants of the various structures were partly the same, so that the information and experiences traveled with relative ease. The peculiarity and the strength of Franco-German talks on textbooks was its duration and its diversity. The long duration created a trust between participants, without which we would never have gone this far in the mutual understanding between the mixed historians researchers and historians of school education. This mutual understanding that is never easy to manage, had the great advantage of reflect upon the production of knowledge to its transmission opportunities. And this advantage was also a strength of our steering committee which became the scientific committee. In that sense, yes, it is permissible to say that the Franco-German textbook is the culmination of talks on textbooks inaugurated in 1930s.

* Secretary General of APHG

Rainer Bendick, PhD in history, has done comparative research on your textbooks and history teaching in France and Germany, where he currently teaches history and French at school in the evening Sophie Scholl in Osnabruck, co Director of the Franco-German textbook.

Peter Geiss, doctor of history, teaches history and French at the Friedrich Ebert high school in Bonn, and teaches courses in history and teaching at the University of Wuppertal. These concern Benjamin Constant, the French liberalism and the evolution of parliamentary government under the Restoration. In 2005 he became co-director of the Franco-German history textbook.

Rainer Riemenschneider, Ph.D in History, former professor at Göttingen, Caen, Braunschweig, Paris, Montpellier. For over twenty years active at the Georg Eckert Institute, an international center of research on textbooks, where he also organized Franco-German meetings on textbooks with APHG and his German counterpart. Since 2003, Member of Steering Committee for Franco-German history manual.

Dr. Rolf Wittenbrock, a history professor, in charge of the Directorate of Europe Division of the University of Saarland, 1992-2006 Principal of the Lycée Franco-German Saarbrücken, Education Research in history and urban planning in a transnational context.

APPENDIX 2

Interview with Rolf Wittenbrock, carried out on the 25th of February 2011 through an email conversation.

Q-1: How were you taught history in your school time?

Rolf Wittenbrock: We had lessons focused on national history, but of course there were some lessons about Greek, Roman and French History

Q-2: Why do you believe in necessity of change in history education?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Our world changed since the 60th of the last century! If we will enable our students to understand the world they will live in it is necessary to enlarge the scope of observation: students have to understand the history of their respective neighbour States, the process of European integration and furthermore the recent evolutions concerning globalization.

Q-3: What was your function/role/opportunity in the German-French common textbook project?

Rolf Wittenbrock: I was a member of the steering group since 2003.

Q-4: What was, in your opinion, the reason and importance of creating a common history textbook for Germany and France?

Rolf Wittenbrock: There are special bi-national relations between France and Germany: Politicians of both countries meet regularly since 1963. These special relationships need special projects highlighting the special shape of their bicultural relations in order to foster and symbolize French-German friendship..

Q-5: How was the textbook created?

Rolf Wittenbrock: This is a long story. You should read the book of M. Claret describing the launching of the preparation of this project which was initiated as a bottom-up project.

Q-6: The countries used to be 'hereditary enemies'. Was it, in spite of more than 50 years of re-working of German-French relations, difficult to overcome the differences and rivalries and create such joint project?

Rolf Wittenbrock: There were only some points of disagreement concerning the content of the common history textbook (for instance the perception of the role of the SU after WW II or the interpretation of the role of the US in Western Europe during the Cold War. Major problems occurred because the surrounding conditions of History teaching are different in both countries: the role of History as subject matter for final exams, the role of the History teacher and the function of text books. So the didactical and methodological gaps in the practice of history teaching in both countries were und remain the crucial problem difficult to resolve via a common textbook.

Q-7: Were there any nationalistic stumble blocks in the dialogues between Germany and France?

Rolf Wittenbrock: No, the German and French editors showed much empathy in order to create the necessary awareness for eventually diverging perceptions and interpretations. S. Answer 6.

Q-8: The Georg-Eckert-Institut researches, among many others, German and French textbooks. What example can you give of nationalistic dimension in their history education?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Nationalistic representations have gone away in both countries nowadays. All you can find actually are slight nuances in perceptions of few remaining historical items.

Q-9: The project was a student initiative. Was the project supported also by ministries of both countries? Were there any doubts or reservations or was it an immediate ‘yes’ from the side of governments?

Rolf Wittenbrock: The project started as a bottom-up project, but very quickly it became of project backed intensively by both governments searching to highlight the special relations and friendship between France and Germany. It continued as a top-down project.

Q-10: Were there any voices claiming that the national dimension needs to be preserved and emphasized in history education?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Of course, there were some critics doubting about the possibility of a bicultural approach in history teaching. But in general, the didactical aim of a multiperspective approach was approved

Q-11: For which classes and what type of schools is this book suitable?

Rolf Wittenbrock: It is suitable for the last 3 classes of Grammar schools (students from 15-17)

Q-12: How was the book accepted by pupils and teachers? How did they embrace the view of ‘the other’?

Rolf Wittenbrock: For the moment, this Edition is quite new. But we can say that students and teachers who also started to use the textbook approved the enrichment in images, documents and the special pages concerning crossover History. For them the added value is obvious.

Q-13: Was the textbook a big difference for pupils, compared to the previous textbooks?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Yes, of course. It is also a shift for the teachers. They must be very open-minded, because it not fits perfectly with the existing syllabus.

Q-14: Every country has events in its history which it is not particularly proud of. How did the German and French team deal with those of their countries? How did both sides deal with controversies in history?

Rolf Wittenbrock: There are no events consciously concealed. The contents of History textbooks are subject to many investigations of History scholars. They would not accept that any event were brushed bashfully under the carpet.

In all volumes of the Common textbook there are special chapters dealing with controversies in history. This interest for historiographical topics is undoubtedly a special feature of this publication. S. also the special pages concerning crossover History.

Q-15: Was it difficult for the two sides to reveal the ‘dark side’ of their national histories?

Rolf Wittenbrock: No, there are many networks between French and German scholars working on this item. So the scientific research was already done.

Q-16: How similar or different were the views of each other and the view of the rest of the world? Was it easy to make compromises?

Rolf Wittenbrock: In general, the perceptions of the editors and authors of both countries were almost coinciding. I gave you already 2 examples for diverging interpretations.

But major discrepancies occurred with historians of other countries who felt that this textbook neglected the history of other Nations (for instance Poland).

Q-17: Which period in history was causing the biggest troubles to the team of the textbook creators?

Rolf Wittenbrock: Probably the time after WWII

Q-18: What would you say is the biggest contribution of the German side and what is the biggest contribution of the French side?

Rolf Wittenbrock: I think that it is a synthesis of two national traditions and conceptions of perceiving history teaching: the layout was more inspired by French concepts, but the shaping of questions for independent student work may be considered to be a more German contribution.

Q-19: What is, in your opinion, the biggest plus point of the book? Minus point?

Rolf Wittenbrock: For the first time, two Nations (which were considered as hereditary enemies) in the world try to forge a common view of their History. This is really quite a revolutionary step for the didactics of history.

Q-20: Do you think this textbook could serve as an example for a common European history textbook? Why or why not?

Rolf Wittenbrock: I don't like the expression 'example'. A Common European textbook is quite a utopistic idea for the moment. But future initiatives in the field of bilateral or multilateral textbook production should take into consideration the aims, the difficulties and the outcomes of the French German project.

Q-21: What is, in your opinion, the role of Germany and France in Europe and its unification?

Rolf Wittenbrock: For me, the reconciliation between both countries was crucial for the European unification process in the past. But now the European Union consists of 27 countries and France and Germany should no longer argue to be the heart or the motor of the integration process.

APPENDIX 3

Interview with Guillaume Le Quintrec
A unique and highly publicized project:
Manual of Franco-German History Klett / Nathan

Editions Nathan and Klett Publishing have partnered to produce and publish the first high school history textbook published in both languages. Both versions are identical in both their content and in their presentation.

The manual is intended for classes of terminals that can be used from the start of 2006 but also to all history enthusiasts eager to have a confrontation of views on the highlights of the history of Europe and the world since 1945 ...

To support the specifics of preparing for Bachelor and the Abitur, textbooks are accompanied by a CD-rom.

The view of William Quintrec, series editor Nathan and co-director of the French work on the realization of the manual:

Q-1: How did the work of French and German historians go?

Guillaume Le Quintrec: In terms of content, a little 'hot', caused by the emergence of significant differences in opinion, was the topic of the role of the USA in Europe and worldwide. The French authors, being 'Gaullist' were quick to stress the American hyper-power, the temptations of unilateralism in Washington or the dangers of US cultural imperialism. The Germans, marked as 'Atlanticist', saw it as an anti-American value judgment, they wished to present the United States first as the champions of democracy, having helped to reconstruct Germany. Heated discussions, where every word was weighted, resulted in a balanced text.

Generally, the content of the manual has not yet caused any problems. The Germans and French have enriched each other's differences. On the merits, the French and the Germans had more or less the same thing to say. The chapter on the memoirs of the Second World War, for example, elicited no tension and allows to lay the hand on the important German papers, usually poorly developed in most traditional textbooks. Similarly, for the French, this collaboration has resulted in a much more substantial chapter on political developments in Germany since 1945 and vice versa.

Another example is the question of colonialism and decolonization. A topic of the North-South relations – so important to understand today – is not addressed in the German programs, obviously because the colonial experience of Germany was very short. German students learn about a topic so that they are not unfamiliar.

Q-2: What were the most commonly encountered problems?

Guillaume Le Quintrec: Difficulties during the project were revealed in the method more than content. The two countries have, indeed, a very different conception of the teaching of history and thus also a different designed manuals.

In France, education is based on both a lecture and document analysis. In Germany, the courses are more interactive: teachers organize discussions and "role play", where students have to argue. The manuals provide lessons much longer, since the information is not really being provided.

It was therefore a task to harmonize two different teaching traditions. The provided specifications were fairly precise, rather close to the French model – short lessons and many questioned documents. The Germans were then forced to flow into the mold of compelling them. We then realized that national resistance is not specifically where you would think it to be. The lesson of two or three pages, based on tight argument is not a universal model: it is very French, 'Cartesian', based on a long rhetorical tradition. The 'essay exercise', very familiar in France, is virtually unknown anywhere else. German (but you could also say British or American) teaching culture is based on different exercises, such as 'test' or 'folder'.

Q-3: In the end, what lessons did you learn from this experience?

Guillaume Quintrec: Finally, the main merit of Manuel Franco-German is that it exists! At first reading, this manual may seem not very different from a French textbook, if the read part is devoted to the Franco-German relationship. But pupils, seeing that this book was developed jointly by French and German historians, take the measure of progress in the writing of history: a comparison of views, confrontational gazes at a distance of clichés, relativization of certain habits of thought ...

It is indeed a Franco-German manual of history, not a manual of Franco-German history. There is no question of retreat into strictly bi-national. The Franco-German cooperation is seen as a lever, as a gateway to Europe and the world. It is the long tradition of Franco-German cooperation which made this project possible and will hopefully open the way for a European history textbook.

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