

AGAINST A "BISECTED CONSCIOUSNESS"?
RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS A PERSPECTIVE
ON THE EVENTS OF 1968 TRANSCENDING
IDEOLOGICAL BLOCS

Jan Arend

Taking into account aspects of the 1968 events in Eastern and Western Europe common to both political blocs might open up an interesting field of research if comparative aspects and those pertaining to a historiography of inter-bloc interdependencies are successfully combined. Recent scholarly publications suggest three areas to which this might be applied: political programs and orientations of the acting people, the extent to which lifestyles and mentalities on both sides of the Iron Curtain mutually influenced each other, and meetings between actors from East and West and the results for their perception of each other. A synopsis of the conclusions proposed demonstrates that developments in Eastern and Western Europe were similar in their anti-governmental thrust. Sometimes, this similarity was due to true mutual perceptions and real influences. Misunderstandings and projections, however, were of similar importance for this history of interdependence as was the adoption of cultural and ideological imports specific to the respective bloc and context.