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Memory and Enculturation

Abstract

It may be safely stated at present that the triad of past, tradition and memory has accelerated at an incredible pace. Memory seems to keep the events of the past alive for ever shorter periods of time. Rites, memories and remembrance are now handed down as written sources in the form of textbooks. How does the narrative of the teaching aids that have emerged in the 21st century then evolve and what are/have been their achievements in the construction of national identity? How do *hon- és népismeret* [Our homeland and its people] textbooks function as tools for building a national community? The subject *hon- és népismeret* taught in grade schools examines and discusses national culture and the processes of cultural reconstruction in a rather specific cross-section. Beyond exploring the interdependence and interlocking of the context and practice of ‘knowledge creation’/‘knowledge transmission’ in primary educational institutions, this paper aims to explore some salient observations on its generational relationship to memory. The importance of this subject and textbook is/has been undeniable, both as a tool for national and social community-building on the one hand and as a tangible archive of the process of heritage transmission/patrimonization on the other hand.

Keywords: cultural reconstruction, patrimonization, textbook, national identity, memory

The role of schools in shaping national identity has been present since the 19th century, but research is only now beginning to shed light on the processes at work.¹ Without some knowledge of the history of our ancestors, we have but little chance of understanding who we are and why we live exactly the lives

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we do. Would it be correct to assume that national trends and the changes in schooling have reciprocally motivated each other? International literature calls this process national *enculturation*.²

Representation of the past, as well as memories from the past, can only be truly alive if they educate us, stimulate our senses, prompt our thoughts and add to our existing knowledge. The methodology of patrimonization and adaptivity³ display similarities. In other words, the development and advancement of the heritage approach, as Vilmos Keszeg put it⁴, represents parallels with the interaction system of traditions.⁵

Digital (virtual) databases, textbooks (smart textbooks⁶, etc.) should be used to present elements of tradition by reflecting on contemporary culture and taking into account the evolution of the visual language of the young generation.⁷

Becoming socially aware requires not only the acquisition of up-to-date knowledge and the development of expected skills, but also the acquisition of a level of literacy that helps individuals to manage their everyday lives and contributes to improving their quality of life. This literacy includes learning about the culture of the community, which encompasses several forms of cultural memory (religious, local, political-national and memories of smaller social groups).⁸

If we accept that pedagogy aims at transmitting the knowledge accumulated throughout the history of mankind, such as science, arts and other forms of activity, i.e., the values created by collective memory⁹ and, in doing so, also encourages the creation of new values,¹⁰ then, in the process of heritage preservation and memory forms, public education is both an ethical duty and a natural expression of transmission for all generations.¹¹

Apart from economic considerations, the mission of schools' is to transmit national culture and develop a sense of identity.¹² The age group of school-children is exposed to different enculturation influences, which develop their

² Barrett (ed.) 2006.

³ About the concept of adaptivity, see Dávid 2015. For a similar concept of adaptivity, see also: Rapos-Gaskó-Kálmán-Mészáros 2011.

⁴ See [Interview with Vilmos Keszeg] 2013.

⁵ Bihari Nagy 2015: 5–26.

⁶ Connected to the article, see the smart *hon- és népismeret* textbook prepared for *Nemzeti Alapanyagterv* [National Curriculum] 2020: Baksa 2020a.

⁷ See also Rab 2004; Rédly 2023.

⁸ About the concept of memory, see Assmann 1999.

⁹ Nagy 2020: 181–196.

¹⁰ Tóthpál 1998. 8: 29.

¹¹ Tóthpál 1998. 8: 29.

¹² Dancs 2016: 405.

own specific knowledge and memory, taking into account, of course, cultural differences, which also influence the effects of enculturation. It is the sum of all these that forms and creates a specific national pattern.¹³

The effects of community-level variables are mediated by family, peers and schools.¹⁴ Of course, according to Halbwachs,¹⁵ individual memories are greatly influenced by the society in which the next generation lives and grows up.¹⁶

21st-century students consider the technical world as their own; they do not protest or rebel against it, as they have grown up together with technical tools and information technologies and have adapted to them with the ability to perform multitasking.¹⁷ They are also able to incorporate and adapt a heritage approach to their own technical world, simply by being present in the interaction system of tradition.¹⁸ To use Pierre Nora's phrase: it is safe to state that the triad of past, tradition and memory has incredibly accelerated. Memory seems to keep the events of the past alive for ever shorter periods of time.¹⁹ Today, a number of disciplines (anthropology, history, literature, etc.) discuss places of memory as parts of an extended terminology, although not in our minds but in objectified forms around which rites are woven.²⁰

Rites, memories and remembrance are transmitted as written sources in the form of textbooks.²¹ Cultural heritage is handed down by one generation to the next in an institutionalized framework. Educational institutions adapt to the challenges of the times and develop increasingly complex fields of knowledge.²² The role of the general education subjects requires a continuous methodological renewal of personal skills and competences.²³ This represents a series of new challenges for educators and teachers. The challenges of our times (the online/internet generation, technological challenges, social and environmental expectations and opportunities, etc.) and cultural memory have created a number of teaching aids and textbooks for teaching national culture. The National Curriculum (2020) lays considerable emphasis on the following:

¹³ Dancs 2016: 412.

¹⁴ Dancs 2016: 416.

¹⁵ Halbwach 2021.

¹⁶ On new opportunities for supporting education, see Kis-Tóth 2013.

¹⁷ Singer n.d.

¹⁸ Here, I will not discuss the problem between tradition and remembrance: namely, that tradition has been created to maintain continuity, while remembrance makes us aware of the fact that it is no longer around.

¹⁹ Nora 1999: 142.

²⁰ Nora 1999: 142–157.

²¹ Keszei 2010: 5–34.

²² On the concepts of education policy, see Mann 1977: 195–214.

²³ Kotshy 2000.

“...an important part of our national culture is folk culture, which is taught in the framework of the subject *hon- és népismeret*.

Its aims include:

- to provide an incentive to discover the traditions and historical relics of the Hungarian language area, i.e., the narrower and broader homeland.
- the aim of the *hon- és népismeret* curriculum is to strengthen attachment to the motherland through ethnographic knowledge and to establish national identity...”²⁴

An important element in institutionalized transmission of tradition²⁵ are textbooks, since textbooks are “reflectors of the complex relationship between knowledge and power”.²⁶ The *hon- és népismeret* textbook can also be regarded as the source of collective memory.²⁷ A textbook²⁸ is a document of an age/period, a carrier and transmitter of an officially accepted body of general knowledge and values. The study of textbooks is not a new research area; it gained momentum mainly after the Second World War through the support of UNESCO. The impact of public education and textbooks on society has been studied mainly in German and French areas.²⁹ Using the methods developed for the analysis of textbooks, a broader research effort has been launched³⁰ on how the narrative of the educational tools produced in the course of traditional education is evolving in the 21st century and what results are being or have been achieved in the construction of national identity. How do they function as national community-building tools?

²⁴ Baksa 2020a: 4, 6; see also: “The aim of the study of *hon- és népismeret* is for the student to: 1. discover that the community tradition, built up over generations, brings the past closer and helps to understand the present, while at the same time providing a direction for the future 2. understand that folk traditions are the carrier of general human values, and therefore knowledge about them is part of general education. 3. to establish their own national self-awareness, to understand the significance of national identity from the aspect of both the individual and the community 4. to be motivated to discover the traditions and historical relics of their narrower and broader homeland, in the Hungarian language area.” [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 2020: 356.

²⁵ On the teaching of tradition, see: Bihari Nagy 2019: 314–322.

²⁶ Beke 2021: 3.

²⁷ Dévényi–Gózszy 2013.

²⁸ For the definition of the concept of textbooks, see Karlovitz 2000: 47–59; Tóth 2018.

²⁹ On the history of textbook research, see more in the two volumes of *Tankönyvkutatás, tankönyvfejlesztés külföldön* by Dárdai–Dévényi–Márhoffer–Molnár-Kovács 2014, Dárdai–Dévényi–Márhoffer–Molnár-Kovács 2015; Dárdai 1999: 44–53; F. Dárdai 2005.

³⁰ Completed with support from *NKFI K 143711 OTKA*.

The discourse on places of memory in the *hon- és népismeret* textbook

As I have already mentioned above, the need to strengthen national identity is also emphasized in the new National Curriculum (2020).³¹ During the course of textbook analysis, it is worth paying attention to the shaping of self-images, along topics such as the construction of tradition, national culture, the representation of community traditions and national values (world heritage, *Hungarikums*) in textbook texts and illustrations.

In this paper, it is my intention to set out the strategic points of an ongoing research project. I will outline the process of analysis and investigation of the textbook *hon- és népismeret*³² and, in this sense, a school textbook should be treated as a source. The analysis applied here employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. The primary question is how self-image is shaped by the textbook(s)? Can it be changed? The subject of the present study is textbook interpretations and their changes, focusing on thematic emphases specific to traditional culture.

Hon- és népismeret examines and (hopefully) transmits national culture and the processes of tradition and culture reconstruction in school education in a specific cross-section. This paper explores the context and the practicalities of the 'knowledge creation'/'knowledge transmission' of educational institutions, beyond the mutual interaction and interlocking of its practical parts, to some salient observations on the generational relationship to memory, while formulating research cornerstones.³³

A summary of criteria for textbooks written for the teaching of traditions.³⁴

1. The context in which the textbook was created (the political, cultural and social history of the period) must be reviewed,³⁵ while at the same time, the aim is to examine the content of the textbook in the context of the literature of the period and the period before it. (The first "real" *hon- és népismeret* textbooks³⁶ were produced for the first National Curriculum, which was published in 1995.)

³¹ [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 1995, [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 2003, [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 2007, [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 2009, [Nemzeti alaptanterv] 2012.

³² Baksa 2020b, Baksa 2020c.

³³ Lajta L. 2006: 101.

³⁴ Lajta L. 2006: 102.

³⁵ For more details, see Baksa 2015.

³⁶ Baksa 2003, Baksa 2005, Baksa 2008; Balázs 2006a, Balázs 2006b; Bánhegyi 2002, Bánhegyi 2009, Bánhegyi 2013; Makádi–Taraczközi 2002, Makádi–Taraczközi 2006. Textbook comparison completed by Gécziné Laskai 2013.

2. It is necessary to become familiar with the educational policies and the educational philosophy of the period under study³⁷ (sources: legislation, teachers' *KKK* [training and outcome requirements], documents on the process of becoming a subject in the curriculum, writings published by educational policy-makers, opinions published in the specialized press).

3. We need to pay attention to the identity of the author(s): we need to know their work, their textbook writing activities, their professional attitude.

4. We need to take into account the background information about the commissioner or publisher, including their intentions and expectations.

In the case of the *hon- és népismeret* textbook (like in the case of all textbooks), it is necessary to be fully aware the following:

- the target audience of the textbook (age group – according to *Nat, hon- és népismeret* can be taught once a week for one year in primary school grades 5-8; from 2020 onwards, the framework curriculum prescribed this for the 6th grade but it continues to depend on the specific pedagogical program of the given institution; type of school; the textbooks prepared for national minorities – for Hungarians living in Hungary or living outside the borders of present-day Hungary in a minority; for example, the textbooks *Hon- és népismeret I-II* published by the Hungarian Pedagogical Association of Subcarpathia³⁸),
- the curriculum requirements,³⁹
- structural emphases depending on the historical facts, educational policies or even social expectations of the period. (Textbooks of the 21st century prefer different topics). Not only thematic emphases are important for research (e.g.: the ratio of customs to material culture), but also aspects of omissions and selection (text folklore, folk music or folk dance).

It has also become necessary to examine the textbook implementation of certain topics and lessons:

1. The weight and position (length, through quantitative analysis) of a topic within the textbook in relation to the other sections, and its possible marginalization. In the 2020 *hon- és népismeret* textbook, the proportion of the presence of customs and material culture can be formulated as follows:

- a) in the case of customs: a significant portion of the book focuses on the presentation of Hungarian folk traditions and customs. These include

³⁷ Explored in detail by Baksa 2015.

³⁸ Kész–Kész–Gabóda–Hutterer 2022a, Kész–Kész–Gabóda–Hutterer 2022b.

³⁹ National Curriculums, e.g. [Kerettanterv] 2020.

festive customs, folk traditions, rituals related to religious holidays, and customs related to the life cycle, such as those surrounding birth, marriage and death. The role of customs is emphasized because the aim of the textbook is to strengthen students' cultural identity and to stress the importance of community life and the preservation of traditions.

- b) in the case of material culture: the presentation of material culture, i.e. the tools, clothing, buildings and other physical objects related to everyday life, is also important. However, this part receives proportionally less emphasis compared to customs. The sections on material culture focus rather on folk art, handicrafts (e.g.: embroidery or pottery) and traditional architecture, but these are not as much detailed as the descriptions of customs. In terms of content, the book conveys a tangible heritage of the 18th and 19th centuries and gives ample leeway to the teacher to connect it to the 21st century.

Overall, therefore, customs are more prominent in the textbook than material culture, although both are important elements of the ethnographic content. Customs [12 of the 34 teaching units recommended by KKK (training and outcome requirements)]⁴⁰ are perhaps given more space because they are more directly linked to community life and the maintenance of cultural identity.

2. It is also worth examining the weight of textbook lessons and topics through qualitative analysis.

3. Researchers may get an even more nuanced picture by analyzing the ideological message associated with certain events discussed in school textbooks. The topic of nationalities appears in several chapters of the 2020 *hon- és népismeret* textbook (However, the culture, traditions and customs of the nationalities living in Hungary are discussed in separate chapters in the block titled "Our heritage, traditions and greats," for which the total number of proposed teaching units is 8). The curriculum here focuses on how nationalities contribute to the cultural diversity of Hungary. Nationalities are mentioned in the context of, among other things, folk culture and regional differences, which illustrate the specificities of different areas of our country.⁴¹ The term "*nemzet*" [nation] appears several times in the 2020 *hon- és népismeret* textbook, especially in the context of cultural identity, traditions and Hungarian history. The book

⁴⁰ For details, see [Kerettanterv] 2020.

⁴¹ Among the notions in the framework curriculum, find the following: *néprajzi csoport* [ethnographic group], *nemzetiség* [ethnicity], *néprajzi táj* [ethnographic region], *határainkon túl élő magyarok* [Hungarians living across the borders], *szórvány* [diaspora], *nemzeti összetartozás* [national unity], *haza* [homeland], *hazaszeretet* [patriotism], *hungarikum* [a collective term indicating a value worthy of distinction], *világörökség* [world heritage]. [Kerettanterv] 2020. A tight connection is required with the subjects geography and history.

discusses national history through presenting different periods and emphasizing the importance of the cultural heritage of the Hungarian nation. The concepts of nation and homeland are devoted special attention to, as the aim is to strengthen the national identity of the students. The term “*nemzet*” [nation] and the discourse surrounding it also adds an interesting touch, as the topic is present throughout the teaching material.

4. We should also consider the logic of the discussion of individual events and the issues of cause and effect. The textbook content displays the character of cause and effect relationships; yet, due to constraints of space, rather concise statements are also formulated in the textbook texts. The reason for this is that the age specificity of the target audience prompts the author(s) to go for a simplifying way of representation.⁴²

5. During the course of analyzing the content of the textbook, it is also necessary to consider which aspects or characters within each lesson are brought to the fore or are left in the background during the period, or how the perception of certain characters changes over time (e.g.: farmers, peasants, citizens, servants, children, girls, etc.). The 2020 textbook also touches upon the topic of student life,⁴³ while the inclusion of several interesting aspects of urban life in the textbook can also be seen as a result of the given period.⁴⁴

6. It is essential to analyze the pool of didactic tools:

- What function do pictures, diagrams, sources and exercises and what emotions do they evoke? [A precise list of sources is included in *hon- és népismeret* textbook. For illustrating cause and effect relations, it would also be useful to include 21st-century photographs and photographic archives.]
- As regards wording, attributes/adjectives, value judgements and elements expressing mood and emotion (through the analysis of the text and its appendices), the textbook under study gives an emotional surplus through literary sources. E.g.: The chapter called *A magyarság összetételének történeti alakulása és a magyar nyelvterület nagytájai* [Historical development of the composition of the Hungarian people and the major Hungarian-speaking regions] is introduced with the help of an excerpt from a literary source written by Sándor Petőfi: “*Magyar vagyok. Legszebb ország hazám...*” [I am Hungarian. My home country is the most beautiful...].⁴⁵

⁴² See more in Dévényi–Góczy 2014: 151.

⁴³ Baksa 2020b: 51–52.

⁴⁴ Baksa 2020b: 53–55.

⁴⁵ Baksa 2020b: 81.

A list of items in the framework for research:

1. The formation of a collective self-image through the textbook. The aim of the textbook is to reinforce the sense of belonging to a national culture (there are numerous examples of textbook references to its characteristic features).

2. The presentation of ethnographic groups and national minorities (the issue of coexistence, changes that have taken place, the culture of ethnographic groups and minorities, the way of representing positive/negative features).⁴⁶

3. World Heritage elements and motifs (under the heading *Közösségi hagyományok és nemzeti értékek* [Community traditions and national values]. The examples shown here are also places of memory: *Hollókő – ófalu* [Old Village], *Pannonhalmi Bencés Főapátság* [Benedictine Archabbey of *Pannonhalma*], *Budai vár* [Buda Castle], *Kilenclyukú híd* [Nine-Hole Bridge], etc.)

Realms of Memory (*Lieux de mémoire*)

Since the publication of *Lieux de mémoires* (Realms of Memory), a major work edited by Pierre Nora, the term ‘realm of memory’ has become an inescapable concept in social and cultural history. *Katalin Takács*⁴⁷ and *Franciska Dede* has also taken note of Nora’s notion of place:

“Although the term *realm* is used in the name, a realm of memory is not necessarily a geographical location in the literal sense, but can be a person, an object, or even a region, a celebration/holiday, a historical event, a literary work or a national symbol.”⁴⁸

What realms of memory do is they recall shared and collectively experienced details of the past for a community. The poem *Nemzeti dal* [National Song] is such a realm of memory that stands for a lot more than its mere self. It is more than a poem.⁴⁹

According to Jan Assmann, who theorized cultural memory in the footsteps of Maurice Halbwachs,⁵⁰ who had in fact pioneered the study of social memory, it is the relationship to the past that provides the elements of self-

⁴⁶ Baksa 2020b: 81–100.

⁴⁷ Takács 2018: 175; Dede 2022.

⁴⁸ Dede 2022.

⁴⁹ See more in a similar wording in relation to literature. Dede 2020.

⁵⁰ Halbwachs 1971.

imagination of the present, as the basis for the goals of action. In Jan Assmann's formulation of cultural memory, "memory needs places, as it involves 'spatialization'."⁵¹

Eric Hobsbawm,⁵² on the other hand, sees "invented traditions" as the social anchoring of values or behavioral norms through repetition that emphasize continuity with the past. Pierre Nora's idea is similar to that of Jan Assmann: it is based on the juxtaposition of memory and history. That is to say, "the collective memory or community of memory embodied in tradition is transformed over time into history, into a memory carried by history."⁵³

Reflecting on this, *Gábor Gyáni* raises the point that

"ethnic identity [...] is a spontaneous manifestation of collective memory conceived in tradition, while national identity is the recollection of a past that has already become history, and the conscious and programmatic assumption of its heritage."⁵⁴

Thus, the question arises as to which elements of tradition can become "realms of memory."

"Realms of memory are created at the intersection of personally experienced and spontaneously acting memory (i.e., tradition) and history (i.e., the reconstructed past) at a moment when there is still something to build on in the historical memory that is coveted and desired."⁵⁵

Realms of memory can take a variety of forms, for institutions, topographical points, objects, cultural works of art or even social customs can all be transformed. What all these examples have in common is that they owe their survival to written sources (culture).

The aids for the reconstruction of tradition (textbooks) used both in education and outside institutional education enhance the transmission of cultural memory and are key mediators in the preservation and transmission of realms of memory.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Assmann 2004: 40.

⁵² Hobsbawm–Ranger 1983; Hobsbawm 1987: 127–189.

⁵³ Lajta L. 2006: 102.

⁵⁴ Gyáni 2000.

⁵⁵ Lajta L. 2006: 102.

⁵⁶ In a similar fashion in the examination of history textbooks. See more: Lajta L. 2006.

Pierre Nora's conceptualization of realms of memory⁵⁷ has been incorporated into several academic disciplines and has also become a focal point in research. For example, in 2010, *Magyar Emlékezhelyek Kutatócsoport* [Hungarian Research Group on Realms of Memory] was established at the Faculty of Humanities at UD, which adapted this notion to the Hungarian context as "*lieux de mémoire*"⁵⁸. These realms of memory should be consciously integrated into education, using the work and findings of the research group. What is the potential of the subject *hon- és népismeret* in this respect?

The evolution of memory of the past

During recent decades, more and more cultural heritage sites have become accessible to visitors at home and abroad. There are historical sites that everyone likes to visit (as a destination for violence or buildings and locations that have been reconstructed to help remember violence).⁵⁹

There are museums dealing with processing traumatic historical experiences (such as the Hungarian *Terror Háza Múzeum* [House of Terror Museum] and *Holokauszt Emlékközpont* [Holocaust memorial Center] or the Jerusalem-based Yad Vashem Institute) and heritage sites or books (*Heimatbuchs*).⁶⁰ The ethnographic and anthropological research of *Heimatbuchs* in the heritage process has been carried out in recent years by Melinda Marinka. According to her, these sources are "Interpretations of the Heimatbuch genre, which present a condensed snapshot of certain individual settlements."⁶¹

These memorial locations may turn out to be even more personal than a traditional museum. In these museo(-cultural) institutions, the recorded recollections of eyewitnesses form an important part of the collections. It is important both for individuals and communities to visit places related to the past. Oftentimes, it is not enough to see or hear about a place in a textbook, a photograph or a film. It is not only the interpretations of these memorial sites that strengthen the sense of belonging to the community, but also the actual memory of the place, through the content of the experience lived in reality.

⁵⁷ A volume of selected works was published in 2010 in Hungarian, edited and translated by Zsolt K. Horváth: Pierre Nora (ed.) *Lieux de mémoire* originally planned to be 7 volumes. K Horváth 2010.

⁵⁸ See the Hungarian Realms of Memory website: [Magyar Emlékezhelyek] n.d. <https://deba.unideb.hu/deba/emlekezhely/index.php>

⁵⁹ Tulipán 2020.

⁶⁰ Takács 2018.

⁶¹ See also Marinka 2019: 310, Marinka 2012: 344–368.

In these places, space and time as good as merge. At places of memory, not only are new emotions attached to the story being told, but the individual's relationship to the events gets also reshaped.

As Pierre Nora puts it, the purpose of having or creating realms of memory is to help stop forgetting.⁶² Disregarding their physical extent, places of memory can be speeches (wedding texts), battles (the Battle of *Mohács* – *busójárás* [a ritual celebration of the end of winter]), memoirs, books (calendars, peasant diaries, reminiscences), photographs, literary poems (*Sándor Petőfi's "Magyar vagyok"* [I am Hungarian]), folk customs (*Betlehemezés* [nativity plays]) or even symbolic acts.

According to Assmann and Halbwachs, textbooks facilitate a two-way process. Thus, memory (either by learning to locate places on maps) tries to recall symbolic, ideational content by recalling places, while cultural memory places symbols or markings in space (geographical), but these places can also become symbols (e.g.: *Gellért-hegy*, Nine-Hole Bridge).⁶³ It is also true that memorial sites are created for the purpose of preservation and to prevent forgetting (e.g.: the so-called *botlatókövek* [stumbling stones] in Debrecen). The chief aim is to make sure that the experience would not be lost for future generations. Through 'objectification' in the process of teaching about traditions, we can create a concept of our environment and thus make the unknown tangible, understandable and comprehensible for the next generation. Of course, this process is also true in reverse.⁶⁴

In the present study, I have explored the literary and ethnographic representation of realm(s) of memory, offering an alternative for strengthening national identity in education and for coordinating and harmonizing interdisciplinary relations (literature - *hon- és népismeret*; history - *hon- és népismeret*, etc.).

According to Nora, memory is a "topical phenomenon,"⁶⁵ i.e., the places of memory created by tradition are nowadays replaced by timeliness and by the feelings attached to places.⁶⁶ If these memories were still experienced, there would be no need for places of memory.⁶⁷ The same formulation can be applied to heritage constructions and heritage transmission models in schools. "A purely functional phenomenon, such as a school textbook, ... can only be considered a place of memory if there is a ritual connected to it."⁶⁸

⁶² Nora 1999.

⁶³ Tulipán 2020.

⁶⁴ Tulipán 2020.

⁶⁵ K. Horváth (ed.) 2010: 13–15.

⁶⁶ See also K. Horváth (ed.) 2010: 19.

⁶⁷ K. Horváth (ed.) 2010: 19.

⁶⁸ K. Horváth (ed.) 2010: 27, 30.

The question arises as to why this happens to be related to *hon- és népismeret*. For one of the goals in the case of realms of memory, Nora also identifies the task of stopping forgetting. Since collective memory fades and disintegrates over time, it is precisely in realms of memory that it is realized. As a methodological revival of this, the model of tradition construction is (/may be) introduced within the framework of the subject *hon- és népismeret*.

The collective memory associated with a place or event is constantly changing. It can either intensify or fade in response to different social, economic or political influences, as the cultural memory of a nation is always a reflection of the current social and power system.⁶⁹

The fact that the content of a memory is either negative or positive is also very noticeable in school education. It is easier to mediate and explain because the process of remembering itself always takes place in the “now” of the present and it shapes the future.⁷⁰

Realms of memory provide a basis for strengthening national identity and national consciousness in education (prominently in the case of teaching history and literature, and also in the case of teaching *hon- és népismeret* since 1995). However, the majority of these are traditional forms of knowledge transfer. In *hon- és népismeret*, beyond alternative pedagogy, a combination of constructive, creative and digital pedagogy should be used (e.g.: Easter in *Hollókő* – custom-place-landscape; *busójárás* in *Mohács* – custom-place-nationality; *birkapaprikás* [lamb stew] in *Karvag* – custom-place-gastronomy, etc.).

When the internal experiencing of memory becomes difficult, the need for external reinforcement becomes stronger and stronger.⁷¹ When the members of the generation that actively lived through the events (as an integral part of their lives) die, it will be up to the next generation(s) to provide and transmit the discourses of memory, the reconstruction of tradition, and the elements of heritage.⁷² This is why it is essential that the institutionalized transmission of tradition (the subject of *hon- és népismeret*) should have a strong place in the school curriculum as a means of remembrance. How can we make the past and memories relevant to the online generation in a knowledge-based society? By processing heritage elements in digital form in search of connections with the current events of the present.⁷³ By using photographs, contemporary reports, objects of the specific period, literary works of the period (music, texts)

⁶⁹ Assmann 2004: 40.

⁷⁰ Assmann 2004: 40.

⁷¹ K. Horváth (ed.) 2010: 20.

⁷² See more in Bihari Nagy 2016, Bihari Nagy 2019.

⁷³ Kloiber 2020.

in order to process everyday life of the era. It is necessary to offer classes (both in primary and secondary education) in which teenagers are confronted with reflections on issues of generational memory.⁷⁴ The method of work has to be frontal class work, where the questions from teachers are followed by explanations. The complexity of *hon- és népismeret* requires the listing and juxtaposition of findings on topics from several disciplines.

“When we discuss memory, we also discuss perception and learning, a swell as knowledge”.⁷⁵ We can also agree with Zsigmond’s formulation:

“Literary texts can also be understood as cultural documents because their cultural context encompasses the social, political, economic and individual conditions of the creation and development of the piece, as well as the cultural milieu, collective thinking and mental thought structures.”⁷⁶

Among the works of fiction that are directly or indirectly related to Hungarian folk/national culture, there are countless examples that appear in school (in textbooks, as compulsory or recommended reading, as memoriter texts or as parables). The best known of these are by Csokonai, Jókai, Móricz, Gárdonyi, Mikszáth, Petőfi, Ferenc Molnár and contemporary authors.

* * *

The need to pass on memories has led to studies that (have) focus(ed) on textbooks. Changing times have also shaped and molded human aspirations for literacy and education. The “folk” values passed on to art can live on and their educative influence will nurture the tastes of the next generation.⁷⁷

In order to strengthen national identity, the concept of the 20th century (the first *Nat* in 1995) has resulted in the institutionalization of the construction and reconstruction of tradition. The effect of the *hon- és népismeret* textbook on national and ethnic studies in the educational institution is that, through its creation and appearance, it “merges the past (tradition), the present and the future.”⁷⁸

The genre specificity of textbooks is that some statements are often included in them without an introduction and, as a consequence, concise sentences

⁷⁴ Plonyi–Abari–Horkai–Tisza 2017.

⁷⁵ Zsigmond 2011 245–254.

⁷⁶ Zsigmond 2011: 246.

⁷⁷ See Molnár 1982: 25.

⁷⁸ Lajta L. 2006: 102.

and series of sentences appear in the texts. Naturally, this may be due to the fact that the information has to be selective for reasons of volume restriction. Detailed cause-and-effect relationships cannot be included in textbook texts with a thorough explanation. A short, concise wording can be responsible for reinforcing stereotypes, and teachers must pay particular attention to this.

An essential part of the patrimonization process is the subject *hon- és népismeret*, taught in public education. It has an important role in the development of personality, in preserving the sense of national identity, and in providing the foundation for general education.⁷⁹

The assumptions according to which the 2020 *hon- és népismeret* textbook review is underway seem to have a solid foundation. The rites, customs, material culture of Hungarian national culture displayed in the textbooks, the depiction of landscapes and the local lifestyles, the characteristics of each region, the way in which minorities and nationalities are presented in them have developed according to the goals identified by the ruling power and social expectations. The subject *hon- és népismeret* and its textbook are / have been of particular importance. On the one hand, they are a tool for creating a national and social community, while on the other hand, they represent a tangible archive of the patrimonization process.

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⁷⁹ In a way similar to history. For more, see Tóth 2018: 27.

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