

**THE SYMBOLIC FIELD OF THE MEMORY SPACE  
IN THE BUDAPEST CHINESE-HUNGARIAN BILINGUAL SCHOOL**

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Meng, Liu (2023). The Symbolic Field of the Memory Space in the Budapest Chinese-Hungarian Bilingual School. *Special Treatment Interdisciplinary Journal [Különleges Bánásmód Interdiszciplináris folyóirat]*, 9.(1). 149-158. DOI [10.18458/KB.2023.1.149](https://doi.org/10.18458/KB.2023.1.149)

**Abstract**

The current paper is based on a research which was carried out in the public Chinese-Hungarian bilingual school in the 15th district of Budapest. The bilingual school transmits cultural memory by organizing activities such as traditional Chinese festivals and rituals and integrating practices. The main objective of the paper is to present and to interpret the Festive ritual elements and those kinds of rituals that constitute the school's symbolic field of memory

**Keywords:** Chinese-Hungarian bilingual school, collective memory, festive rituals

**Discipline:** cultural anthropology

**Absztrakt**

A KOLLEKTÍV EMLÉKEZET SZIMBÓLUMAI EGY BUDAPESTI KÍNAI-MAGYAR KÉT TANÍTÁSI NYELVŰ ISKOLÁBAN

A tanulmány arról a kutatásról számol be, amit a Budapest 15. kerületében található kínai-magyar két tanítási nyelvű iskolában került kivitelezésre. Az iskola különböző rendezvények szervezésével hozzájárul a kulturális emlékezet közvetítéséhez. Jelen tanulmány elsősorban azokat az ünnepi rituálékat mutatja be, amelyek fontos szerepet töltenek be a kínai kulturális emlékezet rekonstruálásához és újraértelmezéséhez.

**Kulcsszavak:** Kínai- Magyar Két Tanítási nyelvű iskola, kollektív emlékezet, ünnepi rítusok

**Diszciplína:** Kulturális antropológia

This study was conducted in the public Chinese-Hungarian bilingual school (Magyar-Kínai Két Tanítási Nyelvű Általános Iskola és Gimnázium) in the 15th district of Budapest. From Pierre Nora's point of view, the school is a typical "site of memory" that unites three meanings: the material field of memory, such as sculptures and calligraphic paintings; the symbolic domain of memory, such as festivals and rituals; and the functional field of memory such as Chinese textbooks (Nora 1989, 18.). These sites of memory reconstruct and reinterpret the past, shaping Chinese-Hungarian cultural memory today. As for the symbolic field of memory, one can agree with Connerton (1989) that past imagery and memory knowledge are conveyed and maintained through (more or less ritualistic) performances. As Connerton argues, ritual performances require festivals because "the regular repetition of festivals and rituals ensures the transmission of knowledge that consolidates identity and thus reproduces it in a cultural sense" (Connerton, 1989). The bilingual school transmits cultural memory by organizing activities such as traditional Chinese festivals and rituals and integrating practices. The paper will focus on the Festive ritual elements and rituals that constitute this school's symbolic field of memory and discuss how these rituals and festivals have reconstructed or reinterpreted Chinese cultural memory.

### **The Rituals of the symbolic field of memory**

Pierre Nora, in discussing the "lieu de memoire," argues that "lieux in three senses of the word-material, symbolic, and functional" (Nora 1989,18). In talking about the symbolic field of the sites of Memory, Nora argues, "since memories are crystallized and transmitted from one generation to the next, but it is also symbolic. Since it characterizes, by referring to events or experiences shared by a small minority, a larger group that may not have participated in them" (Nora 1989,19). In the case

of the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school, the "events and experiences" are the festivals and rituals. The symbolic field of memory is embodied in the school through various festivals and rituals. In other words, cultural memory serves to condense the past into a system of symbols. Through festivals and rituals, the image of memory is presented in the present, thus transmitting its stored values and behavioral norms to the collective members to consolidate the collective identity.

To explain how the condensed symbol system works, Rigney (1990) introduces the term 'convergence' into the discourse of cultural memory studies. Cultural memories tend to 'converge and coalesce' into a lieu de memoire. For example, the school rituals of national commemorations include drama performances that bring together stories, iconic images, and themes from the past to form a site of memory. The meaning generated by the play is then brought together and condensed into this site of memory. But, for each rememberer, this place of memory is not a static, fixed repository or storehouse of memory. In this process, memory is dynamic. People reconfigure their relationship to the past while remembering and reorienting their relationship to established and emergent sites of memory. Relationships mean that memory becomes an active symbol of connection between the past and the present; it is both a symbol that preserves earlier stories and relates to the past from a particular point in the present. Erll and Rigney argued, "'remembering' is better seen as an active engagement with the past, as performative rather than as reproductive" (Erll and Rigney, 2012, 2.).

Not only this, but it is worth noting that different memory individuals behave differently regarding script replication. When I asked one of the Chinese students who participated in the performance, all she knew was that it was a drama performance on 23 October to celebrate a revolution in Hungary. It is possible to face other Hungarian students and stand on the stage, watch the performance, or just

hear about the 23 October revolution to unfold the meaning or connect it to a specific image, narrative, film, etc. But as Rigney (2005,14.) puts it, memory sites „are defined by the fact that they attract the intense attention of the person doing the remembering, thus creating a self-perpetuating vortex of symbolic investment”. That is, whether Chinese or Hungarian students, „When individuals and groups express or embody or interpret or repeat a script about the past, they galvanize the ties that bind groups together and deposit additional memory traces about the past in their minds. These renewed and revamped memories frequently vary from and overlay earlier memories, creating a complex palimpsest about the past each of us carries with us” (Winter, 2010,11.).

The work of the symbolic system in the ritual elements of a ritual or festival event is the work of the symbolic field of memory. Rituals are symbolic systems, and as Turner argues (1973), the ritual symbol is “the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behavior”. That is, ritual is a symbolic aggregate. The symbolic object and the symbolic behavior in the symbolic form are the basic units that constitute the ritual pattern. It is evident that in these sites of memory, ritual conveys meaning primarily through its symbolic presence. As Nora (1989,19.) puts it, “Even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, becomes a lieu de mémoire only if the imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A purely functional site, like a classroom manual, a testament, or a veterans’ reunion belongs to the category only inasmuch as it is also the object of a ritual”.

Applied to school rituals, and symbolism consists of a cluster of symbols hung in a physical object. It becomes “a world of meaning, a system of symbols using sensual means as symbols of meaning” (Xue, 2003, 39. - Author’s translation).

Geertz (1973) sees ritual as a system of symbols around which people construct their own cultural stories and through which they can know the world

by interpreting and explaining rituals. In other words, ritual is a unique knowledge system that uses symbols to perform symbolic acts and symbolic thoughts to achieve symbolic meanings. Ritual symbols reflect not only the requirements of the ritual itself but also the basic requirements of social existence and the values shared by people. In the process of identifying and cognizing ritual symbols, participants can obtain subtle indoctrination from the symbols. School rituals are the process of performing a series of symbolic acts according to certain cultural traditions, following certain norms and procedures. The cultural meaning can only be stored in the symbols, so the display and interpretation of typical symbols in the rituals help the students understand the cultural context of the rituals. For example, the cultural connotations of flags, ribbons, and emblems are explained during the graduation ceremony for Hungarian Chinese Bilingual School; the cultural connotations of Chinese red decorations and the Chinese Lunar New Year are introduced during the Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration.

In commemorative ceremonies, events, times, and people are told through drama. All of these contribute to the students' gaining an understanding of the cultural connotations.

Some of the symbols in school rituals point to known facts, and some are condensed forms. Turner (1967) states that condensed symbols' meaning touches the deeper and deeper roots of the subconscious and spreads their emotional qualities to all kinds of actions and situations that are far removed from the original meaning of the symbols. It is evident that the presentation and interpretation of symbols of school rituals not only help students understand the cultural context of rituals but also stimulate their emotions and cultural memory. As Turner points out, crude, primitive emotions become noble because they are associated with social values, and in this case, tiresome moral constraints are transformed into “a love of virtue”

(Turner, 1967). Thus, the meaning of the existence of school rituals is not limited to the influence of the moment but points to the entire daily life of the students in school. And rituals exist to influence reality through symbols. For example, the national anthem and the standing posture of teachers and students during the school's celebration of the Chinese National Day and Certificates and body postures in award ceremonies are all symbolic prototypes of educational rituals.

In addition to the symbolic narrative of ritual, we should also be concerned with the performative nature of ritual. Performative acts rehearse and complement emotions, and such emotions give the initial memory or story embedded in them an adhesive power that resists the erasure of memory or forgetting. Thus, emotions are permanently inscribed in the performative act in general and the performance of memory in particular. Another example is the line on the play performed on 30 October 2022, which reads:

„Valami szálló ragyogás kél,  
valami szent lobogás készül.  
Zászlóink föl, ujjongva csapnak,  
kiborulnak a széles útra,  
selyem-színei kidagadnak:  
ismét mienk a pesti utca!”

(Sources from the fieldwork site, recorded by the author on October 23, 2022 at the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School).

The lines are described in descriptive language light and fire rising, flags flying, and colors swelling. The lines describe the light and fire that represent the light in descriptive language as if a sacred baptism. Along with the lines, the students held red flags, and then a crowd appeared on stage to show the flag flies on the road. And someone shouted a slogan, “ismét mienk a pesti utca!”.

The performative utterances with costumes, music, and body movements bring the atmosphere to the story's time. That is, the emotions are

embedded not only in the story but also in the act of performing. Further, in addition to the symbolic utterances described above, the ritual is narrated as a speech act. Most rituals have a verbal component, such as the oral school ritual, which is an obvious speech act. Austin (1962,1970) developed a celebrated theory of performativity in speech acts. This theory argues that performativity is not just descriptive or performative. Performativity describes the reiterative power of discourse to create and produce the phenomena it regulates and constrains. For example, in the 2016 Chinese Ambassadorial Scholarship award ceremony at the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School, the Ambassadorial Scholarship was announced by the principal officer of the school. As the theory holds, at the time of the announcement of the Ambassadorial Fellowship, this event indicated that it had happened. School rituals have taken on a much richer meaning. At this point, we think it is time to define the ritual or ritual elements of the symbolic field in school, the main object of study in this research. Turner (1973, 1100) believes that „A ritual is a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests”. It can be seen that the ceremony involves events, people, and places to carry out activities.

The ritual elements in school ceremonies or festivals described in this article are activities centrally arranged or programmed to be performed in the school memory space with the help of symbolic cultural symbols (body movements, objects, speech acts) that reflect Chinese cultural memory.

### School Rituals and Cultural Memory

There are various rituals in the school field. Wang Haiying (2007,14.) has classified school rituals into four categories, 1) ritualized. It includes

a flag-raising ceremony, initiation ceremony of the team, adult ceremony, etc., 2) Educational rituals. For example, classroom teaching rituals between teachers and students and daily educational ritual activities. 3) Ceremonies. There are new students opening ceremonies, graduation ceremonies, etc. 4) Celebrations in festivals. There are festivals, school celebrations, special events, etc., which are both entertaining and educational. The same applies when applied to the case of the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school.

Further, in this study, I divided the rituals into three categories: transitional rituals, daily rituals, and festive rituals. Transition rituals, in this case, are mainly rituals that involve the change of students' identity, such as the opening and graduation ceremonies. Daily rituals are the rituals of interaction between students and teachers and even include the rituals of class dismissal. Festival traditions refer to the ceremonies that will be held based on traditional cultural festivals. As an organizational form of cultural memory, school rituals consciously shape collective identity and guide the production of cultural actions by storing, accessing, and communicating culture.

In the ritual exhibition, the cultural memory attached to the media, such as images, texts, costumes, dances, music, body movements, and facial expressions, is presented in a concentrated way to provide markers for group members to carry out their identity. In terms of the characteristics and mechanisms of ritual storage of cultural memory, rituals in Hungarian Chinese bilingual schools can activate students' cultural memory through the following ways. The first is to deepen students' impressions of the ceremony through proceduralization. In the view of Connerton (1989), ritual is a formalized language. For the speaking and use of this language, there is a tendency to stylize and typify it, consisting of a largely unchanging series of words. To some extent, the stylization of these languages is the programmatization of ritual

language. The programmatic style of ritual language does not originate with the current performers but is already present in such ritual practices. According to previous codes and rules, words and actions are performed as in previous ritual situations. The program of the ritual is predictable from the beginning of the speech act to its end, and as soon as it begins, you can only continue in a proper ritual sequence.

Taking the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School graduation ceremony as an example, comparing the three 12th-grade graduation ceremonies in 2020, 2021, and 2022 there are incredibly similar processes. Taking the 2021 12th grade graduation ceremony as an example, the following is the manuscript of the fieldwork record of the author (the manuscripts of the fieldwork are derived from the author's records.):

- The host made an opening speech and introduced the purpose of the meeting.
- Entrance of the 12th-grade graduates (the flag bearer representative raises the flag, and the two deputy flag bearers guard the flag. Afterward, the class teachers led the 12th graders to enter in line with the music in full dress.)
- Speeches by the principals of both schools.
- The host invited the representatives of the graduating class to tie the white ribbon of the graduating class on the flag of the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School.
- Representatives of the graduates put on the school badges for the principals and vice-principals of both Hungarian and Chinese schools.
- The Hungarian principal put on the school emblem for the class teachers of the 12th grade.
- As the first step towards the end of the graduation school year, the class teachers put on the badges for the students one by one. As the students' photos and names were shown on the big screen, students walked from the stage to the front of the stage, where the class teachers

put on their badges. The student stood slightly sideways and faced the teacher. When the pin was placed, the student and the teacher stood together for a few seconds in front of the stage, and then the teacher stepped back to the front side of the stage and watched the student walk from the front to the side of the stage. At the centre of the stage, the student took a picture with their picture and name and stood for a few seconds before retreating to the upper side of the stage. The teacher watched the student push into the side and then stood forward, looked ahead, and greeted the next student to repeat the process of wearing the badge. A student's badge-wearing lasts for 30 seconds, and then the previous step is repeated.

- After the completion of the badge-wearing ceremony, male students stand on the left side of the stage together with the three flag bearers, and female students stand on the right side of the stage, standing sideways. In the end, a group photo of the whole graduating class and a group photo of each individual's headshot is displayed on the screen. The photo was bilingual in Hungarian and Chinese. The titles are Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School 2017-2021; each person's mugshot noting their name; the class teacher's photo and name; and the group photo.
- A representative of the 10th-grade students sang a song to give birthday wishes to the 12th-grade students. During the performance, the graduating class students stand on the stage in the same position.
- The teachers of the Chinese Embassy will present the souvenirs of the Embassy to the teachers and students of the graduating class.
- The host gave the curtain call speech.
- The class teachers led the 12th-grade students to follow the rhythm of the music clockwise on the stage and leave the stage in order. In the end, the class teachers led the students to form

a single line, with the primary flag bearer and two secondary flag bearers following at the end of the line to leave the stage. All teachers on the field watched the students leave.

The above ceremony was the second graduation ceremony for the 12th grade at the Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual School. It was held against the backdrop of the pandemic, and students wore masks to the ceremony, and the school curtailed the celebratory performances, eliminating parental attendance and dances. The graduation parade and the wearing of the badge were retained as a major part of the graduation ceremony.

Compared to 2022, the graduation ceremony was expanded to more than two hours after the epidemic subsided. The ceremony consisted of a graduation parade, badge-wearing, a graduation program, and a graduation dance. However, by comparing the graduation ceremony process over the three years, the general process is similar, and the programmed language of the ceremony is also determined to a certain extent through the process or procedure of the ceremony.

The graduation ceremony's name is "XX Hungarian Bilingual School Graduation Ceremony". The programmed language of the ceremony tends to be stylized and consistent, and the performance of the ceremony only needs to follow the rules and progress step by step. So as Connerton (1989, 59.) argues, "the limited resources of ritual posture, gesture, and movement strip communication clean of many hermeneutic puzzles". Thus, the rituals are performed only under the procedures and in a step-by-step procedure. It is worth noting that during the ceremony, the procedural language throughout the ceremony was bilingual - Hungarian and Chinese.

From the presiding officer's speech, the principal's speech, and the students' speeches, the language was Chinese and Hungarian together. Using Chinese characters in this school ceremony sets it

apart from other schools in the area. Chinese characters are inscribed with the long-standing cultural memory of the Chinese people. The sense of community of the Chinese nation, which is embedded in the symbolic system of Chinese characters, is first and foremost characterized as an identity. Through the ideographic system of Chinese characters, students can look back on history and feel the splendour of Chinese culture, constantly evoking the collective memory and emotion of the Chinese nation.

In other words, symbols not only have the function of expressing meaning but also can evoke human emotions (Hülst, 1999). Unlike the Western system of epigraphic writing, Chinese symbols carry meaning in form and lead the human mind to cultural, philosophical, and value levels through visual intuition. It takes the collective memory of the Chinese nation's sense of community identity. In particular, when the 12th-grade student representatives came on stage, one tied the ribbon representing the class to the flag. Another student stood at the centre of the stage and explained the meaning of the ribbon tied to the flag in Chinese: „The ribbon tied to the flag also ties our memory of this school. The motto on the ribbon is, ‘Wherever we go, we will do our best’”. In this process, the Chinese characters act as ideograms for cultural memory, creating an atmosphere that invites memories and acting as a catalyst to activate students to carry them. Chinese characters carry the idea of language and remind Chinese memory. Students learn about China's culture and traditions over thousands of years through Chinese characters, a medium with a long history of symbols.

Also noteworthy in the graduation ceremony program was the presentation of gifts to the graduating students by the representative teacher of the Chinese Embassy in Hungary, which became a distinctive feature of the graduation ceremony process. When the host reads out the presence representing the state's power, the embassy's

representative teacher comes up to the stage to hand out the gifts to the students and shake hands with them. The body posture and movement formed when the student receives the gift create a body memory. In this regard, “as the material base of the subject of memory, memory is most basic, and primarily a bodily memory, the subject of memory is essentially embodied as a conscious and emotional body.” (Zhao, 2013, 89.). It can be seen that as the material basis of memory, the experience of the body is perceptible and recognizable. It is centred on bodily experience from the objective and real physical world, and memory is preserved through body language. And in rituals, with the symbolic culture constructed by the symbolic system, school rituals can accomplish the transmission of the national voice and humanistic values. The symbolic power of the state encourages the participants of the ritual. This means that the students will also feel the great hope and blessing of the Chinese Embassy for the graduates when they receive the gifts. The ceremony participants can acquire the cultural meaning symbolized by the ceremony through their participation. In this case, it means the cultural memory that is officially transmitted, the Chinese memory.

The programmatic nature of school rituals can be seen to reinterpret Chinese cultural memory. From this, we realize that cultural memory cannot be spontaneous. Instead, cultural memory is formed in schools with the help of ritual system symbols. The communicative space as a cycle of cultural meaning involves, first and foremost, festivals, celebrations, and other elements of ritualistic, celebratory behaviour. In such celebratory communicative acts, cultural memory is displayed through the totality of multimedia with symbolic forms. The primary purpose of these acts is to secure and perpetuate social identity (Erl, Nünning and Young, 2010). By bringing traditions to life through reminiscence, school rituals bring knowledge systems and cultural memories that must be transmitted into the present

and guide participants to understand their cultural significance. By relying on various traditional festivals, various school rituals are conducted to not only recreate the scenes of traditional festivals but also to convey the idea of their traditional cultural connotations. For example, the traditional festivals represented by the Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, and National Day convey traditional cultural concepts such as family reunion, respect for ancestors, and patriotism. Shils (1971) states that „tradition is a way of doing things that have been passed down from generation to generation around different areas of humanity. It is a cultural force that has a normative effect on social behaviour and a moral appeal, as well as a deposit of creative human imagination over the course of history”. Traditional cultural symbols highly condense the cultural tradition of a country or nation and have a tenacious vitality and a broad social foundation. Using traditional cultural symbols to activate cultural memory requires school ceremonies to express traditional cultural symbols in a contextual and exhibitionistic way. Among them, contextuality emphasizes that school ceremonies evoke analogous associations or memories of traditional cultural symbols through specific situations. For example, the first item of the Chinese National Day commemorative ceremony was playing the Chinese national anthem, “March of the Righteous and the Brave”, with all standing. Students stand and are placed in a unique musical situation, which can easily evoke emotional belonging.

Students and teachers stand at attention when the Chinese national anthem is played. As a symbol of cultural memory, the national anthem conveys the voice of the state and symbolizes the state's indoctrination of students. Students are attentive in this context and solemnly participate in the ritual performance. During this time, those things that belong to the self are quietly concealed, allowing the mysterious forces behind the ritual to paint and

transform their memories. The ritual generates a passionate public emotion, a solid collective emotion that, because of its resonance, evolves into the common memory of the group. It is not only the memory of the school but also the memory of the political symbols of the ritual, which eventually evolves into the cultural memory and identity of the educated. It can be seen that school rituals are a series of symbolic acts performed according to certain cultural traditions, following certain norms and procedures. Cultural meaning can only be stored in symbols, so the typical ceremony symbols are displayed and interpreted. For example, at the graduation ceremony, the cultural significance of the badge was explained - the custom of wearing the badge began in 1830 as a tradition, and 12th-grade graduates were eligible to wear the badge belonging to the graduate in the second year of school. At the Chinese Culture Day, the lion dance was explained as a traditional Chinese folklore activity - Chinese folklore tradition believes that the lion dance can ward off evil spirits. Therefore, lion dances were held during the festive season to celebrate the occasion. In the New Year celebration party of the Year of the Ox, the meaning of the ox in traditional Chinese culture was explained - the totem of the pastoral. Also, the custom of the New Year was described - red decorations are a traditional Chinese custom, which holds the desire for beauty and abundance (the interpretations of the ritual symbols are all from the field notes of the author's fieldwork.).

This series of ritual elements are interpreted in addition to the festivals, and the transmission of cultural memory of education is achieved with the help of physical practices. For example, during the Chinese New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival, students are arranged to wrap dumplings, write brush characters and wrap zongzi, among other activities that are distinctive to the festivals. On the eve of the Chinese New Year, Ms Hao from the school led the students to



experience and learn about the traditional food of Chinese New Year, dumpling making. It is also to enhance students' cultural identity through cultural experience. Hans-Georg Gadamer states, „Something is experienced if it is not only experienced but if its experiential presence also acquires a character that gives itself a continuing significance.“ Engaging students in ritual Enhancing cultural experiences reflects the nurturing value of school rituals. Specifically, the national anthem creates a solemn ritual atmosphere in political and commemorative ceremonies. The national anthem tells the nation's history, shapes the country's collective image, and students gain an experience of national identity.

Daily school rituals through classroom rituals Chinese primary and secondary schools have classroom rituals. For example:

- When the teacher enters the classroom door, the class leader calls out, “Students stand up!”
- Then the students stand up and collectively say out loud, “Hello, teacher!”
- The teacher responds, “Hello, class!”
- The class leader then says, “Sit down!”
- When the bell rings, the teacher says, “Class dismissed!”
- When the bell rings, the teacher says, “Class dismissed”, and the students stand up and say, “Goodbye, teacher!”

This experience is practiced in a class at Hungarian Chinese Bilingual School. And in the daily interaction rituals of students, every student will say, “Hello teacher” in Chinese when they meet their Chinese teachers. When they meet their Hungarian teachers, they say hello in Hungarian. Through the daily rituals, students gain experience of the differences between Hungarian and Chinese cultural habits.

The graduation and commencement ceremonies are identity-transformation confirmation ceremonies designed to confer a clearly defined right and

obligation to the new role. The solemn and straightforward atmosphere of the ceremonies allows students to gain the experience of approaching the awareness of their new role.

By adding traditional cultural experiences to the traditional festival-style rituals, students can perceive the wisdom of the ancients in dealing with human relationships and human-nature relationships through folklore experiences. For example, at the 2017 Ambassadorial Scholarship Award Ceremony, Chinese cultural backgrounds were set up to draw pandas, paint panda paper-cutting art, and give pandas eyes. 2020 Chinese National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival were celebrated with experiences of painting the national flag and pandas in the lower grades. Chinese calligraphy, paper-cutting, and Chinese painting experiences were held on the 2022 Chinese National Day. The experience of ritual culture is a reinterpretation of Chinese cultural memory and condensation of individual and collective memories. Thus school rituals that are repeated at specific times can provide a marker for the identity of the collective members.

### Conclusion

Regarding the symbolic field of memory, according to Nora, in schools' ritual or ritual elements serve as representatives of the symbolic field. Paul Connerton's (1989) view of the imagery of the past and knowledge of memory is conveyed and maintained through ritual performance. Ritual performance requires opportunity, which compels attention to festivals and festival elements. This is because, as Connerton argues, the regular repetition of festivals and rituals ensures the transmission of knowledge, consolidates identity, and thus reproduces it in a cultural sense. Bilingual schools transmit cultural memory by organizing events such as traditional Chinese festivals and rituals and integrating practices. School festivals and rituals are important vectors of symbolic forms of cultural memory. These vehicles condense the

past into a system of symbols and present images of memory for representation and interpretation through festivals, ritual celebrations, and other forms. As Assmann (2011) argues, cultural memory is fixed through objective externalizers such as words, images, and dances due to its reliance on highly formed rituals, festivals, etc., and it has a dedicated traditional bearer. The regular repetition of rituals and festivals ensures the spatial and temporal cohesion of the participating ritual groups and consolidates the transmission of identity knowledge. This process transmits the stored cultural essence of the past to collective members to consolidate identity. As with this act of celebration, cultural memory is displayed through diversity with symbolic forms whose primary purpose is to secure and perpetuate social identity.

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