

DUTCH - HUNGARIAN MEETING

A Symposium was organised by Dutch and Hungarian Teachers of History in

June 1-5, 1987.

In course of an internationally recognized symposium of methodology held last year in the Netherlands Hungarian teachers of history and experts of methodology presented aspirations, the improved methods and contents of teaching this subject in Hungarian schools. This symposium was organized as a part of a cultural exchange between these two countries. Experts of teaching history as a school subject from the Netherlands presented mainly their experience in teaching history from a multi-perspective approach in the Netherlands, in 1986 while this year their Hungarian colleagues have chosen as an agenda for their recent meeting the utilization of various sources and primary data for teaching history within Hungarian primary and secondary schools.

Historical sources constitute an important means of innovations of teaching history in Hungary; there are sources, statistical data, artifacts and other resources, etc. and their utilization in the classroom offers a specific opportunity for knowledge and understanding of this school subject. Hence, pupils will become familiar with history not only through textbooks and then via their own researching work discovering and elaborating data and drawing their own conclusions.

Hence, sources become a major focus of developing awareness and skills related to history by our pupils.

Topics presented by the Hungarian teachers of history were mainly related to Hungary's history of the XVIII. th and XIX. th centuries. Edit Csorba discussed the demographic conditions in the XVIII. th century based on genuine statistical

data and some sources from that age: a project by the archbishopric of " Kalotcha" for populating Hungary: Einrichtungswerk des Königreich Ungarn, and also Samuel Tessedik: Der Landmann in Ungarn, was er ist und was er seyn könnte; nebst einem Plane von einem regulirten Dorfe.

Based on these two sources pupils could get familiar with some concepts about migration in that age; they could analyse statistical data of migration. Tamás Zárday has shown us a methodological study lesson with the aim of presenting great personalities of history. Based on the diary of Ferenc Rákóczi II students could discuss and analyse choices and decision-making of people actively involved in making history. The next demonstration has also discussed demographic aspects of history: changes of demographic character in the second half of the XIXth Century. Pupils could discuss and analyse demographic conditions, aspirations of ethnic and national minorities in terms of the general framework of socio-political development upon studying original sources and statistical data.

Beyond exposition and elaboration, analysis of some aspects of social and economic development, a main aspiration of teachers of History in Hungary has been the understanding of people's lives through history. Slides of the contemporary fashions, buildings, settlements, way of life could offer some more refined framework to pupils in order to understand history. Gábor Gyapai has well illustrated this approach through artifacts and other things from the ancient ages in course of his demonstration lessons, then Ágnes Farkas has a demonstration of how to teach the way of life of people in the XIXth Century.

Repeated and continuing meetings between teachers of history from the Netherlands and Hungary have fruitfully contributed to the awareness of history of these two peoples and also to the understanding of some methodological problems.

István Horányi, Budapest