Thanks to the international history didactics movement which have been putting enormous efforts on developing new approaches in history teaching, recently we have been witnessing some cutting edge approaches in history schoolbook analysis. Among the approaches and methods that seem suitable for this kind of analysis, we have to count with classification of the types of the books (from text oriented reading books to activity oriented workbooks); focusing research of interdisciplinarity (the role of related arts, way of life, history of culture etc.); research of mono- or multi perspectivity of sources; research of typography, etc.

It is certainly an important issue that what should be analysed and how? In Gerd Stein’s conception any book that is used in a school environment can have three main dimensions, i.e. Informatorium, Pedagogicum, Politicum (F. Dárdai 2006, II., 75-76.). Standing on this basis, renowned experts made attractive attempts to develop different models. Peter Weinbrenner developed a complex history book research model (F. Dárdai 2006, II., 78.), while Ágnes F. Dárdai created a thororly checklist that can support the detailed analysis of any history textbook.

On her alapos checklist Ágnes F. Dárdai has devoted a special attention to questions and tasks; She not only listed them as an independent issue when consderinf hstry books, but also named five special markers for their evaluation:

- the standard of QTs adequate to the pupils’ age;
- the proper proportion of reproductive and analytical QTs;
- the relevance of QTs;
- the importance of regularity of QTs, especially at the synthetical phase of learnig;
- and the variaty of QTs,

as the most important considerations when evaluating QTs in a history book. (F. Dárdai 2006, II.,111-116.)

Schoolbook? Textbook? Workbook? Or something else?
See Egil B. Johnson who makes a difference between *schoolbooks/Schulbuch*, written and used in schools with no particular didactical considerations; and
*textbook/Lehrbuch*, written specially for teaching purposes. See Georg Kerschensteiner and Robert Seidel who are authors of the conception of the *workschool/Arbeitschule* (F. Dárdai 2006, II., 46-47.)

(1) *Didactical apparatus*, in general, consist of:
- **texts** (texts of any kind; basis text, source, mini-lexicon, collection of concepts, etc.),
- **icons** (iconical objects of any kind, sources or illustrations; portrait, painting, drawing, cartoon, caricature, map, chart, statistical data, chronology),
- and excercises, questions, tasks (EQTs).

(2) In the **Recommendations** of our ISHD from Braunschweig (in 1989) and Brisbane (in 1991): the didactical apparatus (which is besides the the basis text, an additional material) is understood as any apparatus that helps learning, that helps the acquisition of historical knowledge and skills. (F. Dárdai 2006, II., 108.)

(3) In a more specification context, **Jan Prucha** distinguishes three types of didactical apparatus:
- didactical apparatus presenting the knowledge;
- didactical apparatus directing the acquisition of historical knowledge or skills;
- didactical apparatus helping the orientation in the book. (Labischová/Gracová 2008, 46.)

Both books are chronology based textbooks, dealing with ancient and medieval history, roughly from the antropogenesis to the 15th century.

Both books were written for the same type of school, on the same level: for the 1st grade of gymnaziums, i.e. for 15-16 years old pupils.

Both books were edited in one and the same state-owned publishing company, with 6 years of difference in the date of publishing (2000, 2006). Note, that in Slovakia the schoolbook publishing is strictly centralised.

Physically, they are of a comparable size.

There is a difference in their language. The first book was published in Slovak language, the other one in Hungarian, since being written for the gymnaziums of the nearly 600,000 large Hungarian population in Slovakia.

Both books are **history textbooks**. (See Egil B. Johnson who makes a difference between **schoolbooks** written and used in schools with no particular didactical considerations, and **textbook**, written specially for teaching purposes.) They were written specially for teaching purposes, and approved by experts appointed by the Ministry of Education.

Both books are equipped with significant didactical apparatus. Evidently, they both contain a very significant amount of primary sources, maps, illustrations, etc. Nevertheless, they do not have neither Teachers’ Book nor Exercise Book attached to them. I think it is very important to point out to this fact once again: that neither of the books has a teachers’ book or a workbook attached. This means that any attempt from the authors’ side to encourage pupils’ activity, is in these books, and can be easily controlled right in the textbook.
Research Q1: How many EQTs are there in these books?

Research Q2: What do EQTs refer to? Do they help handling the basis/descriptive text? Or do they help handling the sources?

Research Q3: How do EQTs handle using the historical map?
I picked up the theme of EQTs, and even within this, I focus my attention on two selected aspects of EQTs. I did not scrutinise anything else in the books. Indeed, please note, that from now on, in my presentation EQTs are going to be the only markers of the quality.

Research Q1: How many EQTs are there in these books?
Since 1989, Slovakia has undergone a significant transition as far as applied methodology in history books is concerned. In Czechoslovakia, history textbooks in the mid-war period (1919-1939) did not contain EQTs at all. During the Communism, they contained some EQTs, but they did not contain primary sources at all. After 1989, there are more and more pictures in our history books. There are more and more sources in our history books. But are there more and more EQTs as well?

I counted the EQTs. I also measured the size of the book surface devoted to EQTs in the book (in square centimeters), and I compared it to the total surface size of the complete book.

Research Q2: What do EQTs refer to? Do they help handling the basis/descriptive text? Or do they help handling the sources?

In Book One, there are some rare examples when EQTs refer to sources. E.g. at the end of the chapter dealing with King Sigismund of Luxemburg and Jan Hus, there is a task which explicitly says: „Use the datas from the Chonicle by Jan z Turca.” (pp. 247/4)
Other example: „According to the images, describe the social life in the villages.” (pp. 31/4)

Nevertheless, in Book One the majority of EQTs refer to the basis text. E.g. „How did [Emperor] Augustus try to restore law and order after the period of civil wars?” (pp.108/3) „Explain the concept: cosmopolitan.” (pp. 85/3) Often, it is explicitly said that the answer can be found in the basis text: „Find in the text” (pp. 157/2); „Find in the basis text the common features and differences between medieval Africa, Asia, and America.” (pp. 185/1); „Compare two paragraphs in the text” (241/5). On pages 112-113, we might see the typical feature of the book when EQTs exclusively refer to basis text, even if there are brilliant sources provided. At the end of the chapter about the Roman Empire (476), there are two sources attached. One of them is a source written by Ammianus Marcellinus (cca. 330-395), a Roman military man and historian, also an eyewitness to the deeds of the Huns. The other source comes from a 6th century Roman bureaucrat and historian, Jordanes’s Getica. This latter one is a fine description of one of the best known battles of the period of migration of the nations, the Battle at Catalaunum (nerby Tricassis; today Troyes in France) in 451. All in all, both two wonderful written
sources, in proper length, well prepared, and mainly containing many vivid historical impulses to work with. Unfortunately, not a single EQT helps dealing with them.

The proportion of EQT referring to the basis text and sources is approximately 10 to 90%. The reason of my uncertainty is that EQTs in the first book are not explicitly expressed in most cases. In other words, the text of the EQTs do not contain unambiguous instructions, and as a consequence it is often not clear (even for the analyst) what pupils are expected to do. As a counter example, in the German/French mutual textbook, practically there is an open reference at the end of all EQTs (M1, M2 etc.) which source that particular EQT is linked to.

There are some EQTs for application, or exercising the knowledge. E.g. ,,Compose an essay on the invention of the wheel which meant a turning point in the communication, military history, commerce and building” (pp. 52/5); ,,Make up a collection of monuments from different periods of Rome, i.e. kingdom, republic, empire” (pp. 113/4); ,,Determine links (subordination etc.) [určte vzťahy] between the following representatives of the Roman Republic: dictator, praetor, senate, censor, aedilis, lictor” (pp. 96/2). Without precise didactical instructions, we can only guess that authors expect some kind of figure or mind map illustrating the system of the Roman republican civil servants, in the synthetical phase of learning. Just to give you a hint of a much more precise formulation of a task, here is a similar example form the German/French mutual textbook: ,,Skizziren Sie die Bevölkerungsentwicklung der letzten 200 Jahre” (pp. 203.)

In Book Two, there are many explicit EQTs, based on direct sources. This book makes an obvious difference between two types of EQTs. EQTs referring to the basis text are printed in black, whereas EQTs refering to the sources are printed in blue. What more, the book contains altogether seven units of ,,Workshop” (M ňely) with a specific goal for in-depth work with sources. Nevertheless, in here in two cases (pp. 164-165. and pp. 186-187.) there are no primary sources but basis text, and eventually all EQTs refer to the authors’ descriptive text.

Assessment / Conclusions:

The problem is that under severe scrutiny, the didactical apparatus of the Slovakian books, and especially their EQTs are only apparently OK.

From didactical perspective, our history books show a ‘closed-shop-window-effect’. Our history textbooks are more colourful than ever. They contain nearly such a great variety of sources as the Western European textbooks. But their content is hardly the same quality. Our books today are well done as far as outlook is concerned, but not sufficient enough, especially if we consider EQTs as a very important tool of the so called target centered activities that should take place on history lessons. The didactical apparatus is apparently rich, since its size copes with the best book of the West. (See the proportion of EQTs in comparision with the total book surface: 4,52% - 2,38% - 3,09%.)
And yet, our history textbooks are still text oriented reading books, rather than activity oriented workbooks. The majority of EQTs in our books are ad hoc and hardly target oriented.

Our authors and publishers cynically neglect and omit EQTs, and simply underestimate their importance in history teaching.

There are much less EQTs in our books (by 112 to 43 % less), and even them, the majority of the EQTs (appr. 90%) refers to the basis text, instead referring to the sources.

The overwhelming majority of maps in the analysed Slovakian textbooks remain unreflected by the didactical apparatus. Our authors and publishers underestimate the importance of pupils activity, and do not aim at consistent training of important skills. Although both books contain few decent EQTs regarding historical maps, they do not feel the necessity of practicing these skills. Both books regard these basic skills as given, as self-evident skills which do not require practising, or exercising. In fact, maps not only do need practice, but in modern textbooks they are very suitable mediums for exercising. Maps without EQTs are more than missed pedagogical opportunities; they are vasting valuable paper.

Books of this kind, with such EQTs, are not suitable for purposes of the new ‘matura’ (abitur), for they are not giving a change to practice such EQT which are usually set by written matura tests.

There is a possibility that teachers/classes work out independent EQTs on their own, also that they do practice, and do work with maps despite a low number and low quality of EQTs referring to maps. Nevertheless, besides such a thick book, besides strictly prescribed curriculum, and besides continuous reduction of number of history lessons – it is not very probable.

Arguments

Why is this all a problem? The core of the problem is a serious discrepancy between everyday reality and strategical aims of history teaching. Recommendations of professional organisations and experts are still not taken seriously.

EQTs are suitable for, and compatible with general aims of the modern history teaching set by the Council of Europe. See the latest Recommendation 1880 of the Parliamentary Assembly of CE from June 26, 2009, especially points No 6. and No. 8: A reduction in course content should be followed by „better skill development and help students’ motivation to further evaluate and explore topics themselves”, and „multiple perspective teaching relies on primary and secondary material availability and involves interactive teaching”.

The aim to make a shift from the memory based learning to the skills based learning, has been a very clearly set goal of our ISHD for a long time. Our aim have long been
discovery based, investigative, and collaborative forms and methods of teaching/learning, as it was expressed by Maria Repoussi. As she put it: There should be „a shift from the teacher to the child”, there also should be „a tendency to keep up with the pedagogical trends which view the child as an active learner”, and history taught in schools needs „a new pedagogical environment advocating shifts from expository to investigative procedures of learning.” (Repoussi 2009, 77-78.)

My analysis confirms the findings of Euroclio, The European Association of History Educators. As Euroclio stated it in its comprehensive report from 2004, hardly any change can be discovered in Europe as far as the practical usage of history textbooks is concerned. According to this report, history teaching in Europe is still textbook based, exactly as it used to be before 1989. History textbooks are often well designed but „the contents are still traditional”. (Leew-Roord, Joke van der 2004, 94-95.) To neglect the EQTs is especially dangerous in a country like Slovakia, where the free market of schoolbooks does not exist. But even in countries with a free schoolbook market, it is possible that publishers only compete in decorating their books (with many maps and icons), but they hardly compete in improving the content of the books, including improving EQTs in it. History textbooks should undergo a severe scrutiny, not only as far their scientific knowledge is concerned, but also as far as their didactical apparatus, and especially EQTs are concerned. As Euroclio states it, the majority of the European teachers fully understand the firm goal to increase pupils’ activity and their cognitive skills on the history lessons, but they are uncertain in application of this. Pupils’ activity and exercising their cognitive skills is possible by using more and more sufficient, and target centered EQTs.

Last but not least, EQTs fit the definitions that recently defined the goals and criterias of modern history textbook. Quoting just two of many, let us stand here two definitions given by Vilam Kratochvíl, and Falk Pingel. Viliam Kratochvíl argues: „History textbook is a methodical medium serving both teachers as well as pupils as source of information, and also as professional guidance and encouragement for them. […] Indeed, history textbooks can contribute to the development of the teaching quality, only if and when they help to work out interpretations, when they eventually cease to serve as source of memorizing other peoples’ interpretations.” (Kratochvíl 2008, 86-87.) Falk Pingel goes even further when saying that history textbook „is to develop the ability to think for oneself, to locate, handle and critically analyse different forms of information and evidence, to frame relevant questions and to arrive at responsible and balanced conclusions and to see other points of view” (Pingel 2000, 14.)

--- „Students ability to apply deductive methods is pretty low.” (Khodnev 2009, 91)


0132.02 Erdmann, Elisabeth: Historical Consciousness – Historical Culture: Two sides of the Same Medal? In: Jahrbuch/Yearbook/Annales 2006/07 of International Society for History Didactics, Historical Consciousness – Historical Culture, Wochenschau Verlag, 2008, pp. 27-38. [Föllehetoseg: konyv sajat konyvtaramban]


0104.07 Smart, Dean–Aktekin, Semih–Harnett, Penelope–Öztürk, Mustafa(eds.): Teaching History and Social Studies for Multicultural Europe. Harf Egitim, Ankara, 2009. [Fölleheto ség: könyv sajat tulajdonomban.]

0104.08 Smart, Dean–Aktekin, Semih–Harnett, Penelope–Öztürk, Mustafa(eds.): Understanding Ourselves and One Another. Active learning for history and social studies lessons. Harf Egitim, Ankara, 2009. [Fölleheto ség: könyv sajat tulajdonomban.]

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0084.05 F. Dárdai Ágnes: A tankönyvkutatás alapjai. Dialóg Campus Kiadó [Fölleheto ség: csak a cimlap az Iskolakultúra 2006/2 alapján.]

0083 Kojanitz László: Lehet e- statisztikai eszközökkel mérni a tankönyvek min ségét? Iskolakultúra, 2004/9,38.[Fölleheto ség: CD Romon saját archívban]