

# Representations of the Holocaust in Swedish secondary school history textbooks

Magnus P. S. Persson

To cite this article: Magnus P. S. Persson (17 Mar 2026): Representations of the Holocaust in Swedish secondary school history textbooks, *Holocaust Studies*, DOI: [10.1080/17504902.2026.2629742](https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2026.2629742)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2026.2629742>



© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 17 Mar 2026.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 56



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

# Representations of the Holocaust in Swedish secondary school history textbooks

Magnus P. S. Persson

Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University, Växjö, Sweden

## ABSTRACT

The article analyzes how the Holocaust is portrayed in Swedish high school history textbooks over seven decades. Based, among other things, on the pedagogical guidelines of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), it evaluates the quality and scope of the textbooks' content. The results show an increased emphasis on the Holocaust and anti-Semitism in recent decades. However, Jewish life before and especially after the genocide is still largely absent, as is the representation of Jewish voices during the Holocaust itself. The study concludes that significant improvements are possible in how textbooks address various aspects of the Holocaust.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 14 February 2025  
Accepted 6 February 2026



## KEYWORDS

Holocaust; antisemitism; Sweden; secondary school history textbooks; Holocaust education; IHRA

## 1. Introduction

The memory of the Holocaust and contemporary understandings of antisemitism are parts of Sweden's public consciousness. These themes have long informed public discourse and have gained renewed significance following the outbreak of the Gaza war on 7 October 2023. Public discourse, characterized by the exchange of perspectives, dissemination of knowledge, and negotiation of values, constitutes a foundational element of democratic society. Within this framework, the education system plays a critical role in creating historical knowledge and fostering historical awareness. Through curriculum-based instruction, schools are tasked with equipping children and young people with the knowledge necessary to understand the past as a prerequisite for engaging with present-day societal challenges.

Textbooks and other educational materials serve as central instruments in this pedagogical mission. The role of the textbook in Swedish education has varied over time, but current policy trends suggest a resurgence in its significance.<sup>1</sup> Both the use and content of textbooks have evolved in response to shifting political and educational priorities. In light of this, examining how the Holocaust has been portrayed in previous textbook editions provides valuable insight for the development of future materials and for understanding the broader educational narratives surrounding this historical event.

**CONTACT** Magnus P. S. Persson  magnus.persson@lnu.se  Department of Cultural Sciences, Linnaeus University, 351 95 Växjö, Sweden

© 2026 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group  
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

This study investigates how the Holocaust has been represented in Swedish schools through an analysis of secondary school history textbooks. The sample comprises textbooks published from the mid-1950s onwards, chosen according to several common criteria. They are general world history surveys, typically spanning from classical antiquity to the present, and designed to provide an overview of key historical events. The course in which these textbooks were used belongs to the voluntary track of upper secondary education, serving as preparation for university studies. It targeted students aged sixteen to nineteen and included both compulsory and some elective components. The textbooks were published by major educational publishers for general classroom use, and, in most cases, first editions were examined.

Since the nineteenth century, educational materials have primarily been produced by commercial publishers. A formalized state review process for educational materials was introduced in 1938 but discontinued in 1991. Since 1992, textbook production in Sweden has no longer been subject to state control. Previously, the *Statens läroboksnämnd* (National Textbook Board) functioned as an independent agency overseeing textbook content from 1948 to 1974. Between 1974 and 1983, this responsibility was transferred to the *Skolöverstyrelsen* (National Board of Education), after which it was integrated into the *Statens institut för läromedelsinformation* (National Institute for Educational Material Information) in 1983. The precise extent of these institutions' influence on textbook production and content remains unclear.<sup>2</sup> Since 1992, teachers have served as the sole reviewers of textbooks and hold full responsibility for determining which textbook, if any, are used in the classroom.

As is shown in this paper, it took a long time before the Holocaust was covered at all, or in any depth, in Swedish secondary school history textbooks. Knowledge of the Second World War gradually increased in the decades after the war, as did the tendency to treat it as a historical event. The transition from news to history is not only a question of time but also of knowledge: the first extensive and comprehensive academic study of the Holocaust was published in 1961 (Raul Hillberg, published in Swedish in 1963).<sup>3</sup> The public trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961 also drew attention to the Second World War and the Holocaust.

A brief historical context might be given. The perspective is one of distance, as Sweden was one of the few countries in Europe that did not suffer from belligerent actions on its territory during the Second World War. It did not send any Swedish Jews to camps, it helped saving Jews from Denmark and Norway and other countries. After the war, there were no political barriers to teaching the Second World War and the Holocaust, unlike for instance in Poland, where most of the Polish Jewish population was annihilated during the Second World War and then forgotten during the Communist period. Gross highlights the historical, political and mental barriers to teaching the Holocaust in Poland.<sup>4</sup>

The textbook played for long an evident role in Swedish secondary school history education, which in general was teacher-oriented. This is reflected in the 1965 secondary school history curriculum, where the history teacher was expected to 'try to instill in pupils a skeleton of facts' and where pupils were to 'be gradually trained to independently assimilate the textbook and crystallize from it material suitable for memorization'.<sup>5</sup> This wording is identical to that of the 1970 secondary school history curriculum.<sup>6</sup>

There is scant research on the representations of the Holocaust or Jewish history and antisemitism in Swedish secondary school history textbooks. Bruchfeld studied school textbooks from the early 1990s and found little mention of Jewish history or about the causes and consequences of the Holocaust, the roots of racism and Nazism, and the same was true for antisemitism.<sup>7</sup> A follow-up and expanded study was conducted by Löwengart in 2004, covering textbooks up to 2001. She found that there was a lack of coverage of Jewish European history and that antisemitism was presented only briefly and without historical context.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.1. Methodology and research questions**

As it is not possible to determine the extent to which individual titles were used in practice, the survey has sought to include all available titles, even those that appear to have had limited circulation. While some works may have eluded standard bibliographic searches, most of the works used at the relevant course level since the mid-1950s have been examined. This approach aligns with the study's objective of tracing both the scope of coverage and the ways in which the presentation of the subject has evolved over time.

The **first question** is: to what extent has the Holocaust been mentioned in the relevant textbooks during the period under study? If there have been changes in scope, when and why have these occurred?

This question is about how much textbook space is devoted to the topic. This says something about where the focus lies in a historical presentation and about changes in the selection criteria for what is considered central.

Jason Nicholls has outlined a range of methodologies relevant for empirical studies of history textbooks. He emphasizes the importance of establishing a clear framework of categories and guiding questions. His examples primarily concern studies of the Second World War, focusing on topics such as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the Blitz of 1941–1942.<sup>9</sup> Also Pingel presents useful 'categories for analysis' including a 'List of Criteria for Analysis'.<sup>10</sup>

The focus is on analyzing the content of the history writing that has been found in textbooks. The methodological work first consists of an overview reading of each textbook and an identification of the structure of the book and disposition of the chapters. An assessment of the scope is made by counting words per line and page. In the next step, a text-driven content analysis follows.<sup>11</sup> The chosen body of texts is analyzed through close and re-reading of the relevant parts of the book. Fundamental to the textual analysis is working with critical questions, working tools, that can be related to 'the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and murder of Jewa ny Nazi Germany' (ideology, political decisions, party politics, etc.) which relate to the subject.<sup>12</sup>

When it comes to 'categories and questions', a thematic checklist is derived from the teaching guidelines presented by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).<sup>13</sup> The IHRA is an intergovernmental body established in 1998 to support and strengthen Holocaust education, remembrance and research.

The IHRA has previously been a point of departure or part of the discussion in several scientific articles where textbooks are examined.<sup>14</sup> This legitimizes the use of IHRA guidelines, as they facilitate a comparative approach. Adamson rightly points

out the limitations of the IHRA guidelines when it comes to teaching. They were created by academics, policy experts, and religious leaders, but without input from teachers with practical experience. Adamson also highlights the constant societal changes, noting that ‘genocide education must adapt in tandem to best address the needs of teachers and students alike,’ which presents a challenge for the IHRA.<sup>15</sup> Although this objection is valid in terms of establishing and evolving genocide education, the Holocaust, and the IHRA guidelines, they may still be useful as a starting point when evaluating textbooks.

The IHRA guidelines suggest learning objectives and content in a comprehensive manner. The section ‘What to teach?’ consists of four main areas relevant to this paper: Scope and Scale, Why and How, Contexts and Developments, and Conceptual Understanding.<sup>16</sup> Each of these areas contains a varying number of subtopics and a total of 42 questions are asked, which together are intended to cover a historical contextualization, the rise of the Nazis, World War II and post-war conditions. These 42 questions can suitably serve as critical questions, although they are too many for a limited survey of this type. Furthermore, the suggestions in the IHRA guidelines on what to cover in teaching are extensive. Teaching can be done in different ways, but to cover all the sub-questions asked in the IHRA guidelines in a textbook would require a comprehensive one and in practice a textbook that only addresses the Holocaust.

The **second research question** in this paper concerns how the Holocaust was handled: In what ways was the Holocaust treated in the textbooks reviewed? This is an open question that goes in different directions and an initial and straightforward part is whether and how the Holocaust is defined. The handling is then not only about presentation, description and explanation of the Holocaust, but also of emphasis, omissions and broader interpretive approaches, without predefining specific categories.

The **third question** is: To what extent are the victims granted agency in the textbooks under examination? This question draws on the IHRA guideline ‘Agency of the victims’<sup>17</sup> and highlights the significance of examining how victims are portrayed and whether their perspectives are made visible.

A brief comment on vocabulary is necessary. In most Nordic countries, translations or adaptations of the term ‘Holocaust’ exists: in Danish and Norwegian as ‘Holocaust’, in Finnish as ‘Holokausti,’ and in Icelandic as ‘Helförin’. Sweden is an exception, as the term ‘Förintelsen’ has been used exclusively since around 1979 to refer to the Holocaust.<sup>18</sup> ‘Förintelsen’ is a borrowing and translation of the German ‘Vernichtung’. A translation of ‘Vernichten’ has been attested in Swedish since 1798 and has been applied in various contexts.<sup>19</sup> As far as can be told, ‘Holocaust’ is not used in contemporary Swedish, although the concept is well known due to English-language education in schools, the strong influence of Anglo-American culture, and the widespread use of English in Swedish society. Another important term, the Hebrew term ‘Shoah,’ commonly used to denote the genocide of the Jews during the Second World War, does not appear to have been adopted in Sweden. In this paper, when quotations from Swedish textbooks are translated into English, ‘Förintelsen’ is consistently rendered as ‘Holocaust’. The first secondary school history textbook to use ‘Förintelsen’ as a heading was published in 1998, in Bergström et al.,<sup>20</sup> and subsequent textbooks examined in this study also employ this term, usually as a heading.

## 2. Coverage of the Holocaust

The **first question** is: to what extent has the Holocaust been mentioned in the relevant textbooks during the period under study? A number of secondary school history textbook titles are presented in [Tables 1–7](#) below. In total, thirty-three textbooks published over seven decades are examined in order to assess the extent to which the Holocaust is addressed and to identify changes in its treatment over time. The textbooks are general world history overviews, usually from antiquity to the present. The survey adopts the definition of the Holocaust provided by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA): ‘the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and murder of Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945’.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, the study focuses on the persecution and killing of Jews during this twelve-year period.

For the most recent decades, the heading ‘Holocaust’ (‘Förintelsen’) serves as a criterion for determining which parts of the textbooks are included in the tables. For earlier decades, when the term ‘Holocaust’ (‘Förintelsen’) was not in use, the assessment is based on identifying passages in the textbook that correspond to the adopted definition, in order to complete the tables.

The quantitative survey encompasses general history textbooks that provide broad overviews of world history, typically spanning from antiquity to the present. In cases where textbooks are published in two volumes to correspond with different grade levels, both volumes have been included to ensure consistency and comparability across the material. The analysis focuses on calculating the amount of space allocated to the Holocaust, as defined for the purposes of this study. This includes recording the number of pages and the estimated word count devoted to the topic, as well as the proportion of the total textbook dedicated to it. As for the number of words, it is an estimate. In addition, the presence of photographs and maps related to the Holocaust has been documented to offer a more comprehensive account of the content and its visual representation.

As seen in [Tables 1](#) and [2](#), the Holocaust received limited attention in the first two decades. Textbooks of the 1950s hardly mentioned the genocide itself but focused on the deteriorating situation of Jews in Germany during the interwar period. The subject was never a separate unit in the textbooks and was more often included in the German history section rather than the Second World War section. Key terms included

**Table 1.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 1950s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	%% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Bäcklin et al. (1954), <i>Allmän historia för gymnasiet</i> 412 p.	0.09	about 100	–
Jacobson & Söderlund (1955), <i>Lärobok i allmän historia för gymnasiet. 1</i> 407 p.	0.05	about 80 words in small font	–
Lindberg et al. (1955, 1956, three volumes), <i>Världshistoria 1–3</i> 509 p.	0.1	about 100 words in small font	–
Söderlund & Seth (1956), <i>Allmän historia för gymnasiet</i> 483 p.	0.07	about 125	–
Dannert & Lendin (1958), <i>Världen och vi</i> 345 p.	0.01	about 20	–

**Table 2.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 1960s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Bäcklin et al. (1962, 1968, two volumes), <i>Historia för gymnasiet</i> , 557 p.	0.09	about 130	1 photo
Kumlien et al. (1963), <i>Historia för gymnasiet</i> 427 p.	0.05	about 55	–
Brolin et al. (1963), <i>Allmän och nordisk historia för gymnasiet</i> 518 p.	0.01	about 130	–
Matsson & Degerman (1966, 1967, two volumes), <i>Historia</i> 581 p.	0.29	about 290 words in small font (part of essay on antisemitism)	7 photos
Borg & Nordell (1967, two volumes), <i>Historia för gymnasiet</i> 969 p.	0.2	about 480	2 photos
Tham et al. (1967, 1968, two volumes), <i>Folkens historia</i> 1096 p.	0.2	about 90	1 photo

‘persecution of the Jews’ and ‘Nazi terror’. The explanations were contextualized as being linked to Nazism as an exclusionary German nationalist ideology, and the racist notion of an Aryan race, both of which excluded Jews. Antisemitism is mentioned, but it plays a more prominent role in the explanation in only one case, where it is described as a ‘recurring leitmotif in Hitler’s preaching’.<sup>22</sup> The mass murder is usually viewed as part of the Nazi ‘terror’.

Textbooks from the early 1960s exhibit a level of coverage similar to that of the 1950s; however, this changes in the latter half of the decade, when coverage increases significantly. Photographs are starting to be used to a greater extent, while more text is also being used. This development cannot be attributed to changes in the curricula. Both the 1965 and 1970 secondary school history curricula include the theme ‘The era of the two world wars,’ under which ‘The ideologies of dictatorship and their effects (Soviet Union, Italy, Germany)’ are discussed. While the Second World War is mentioned,<sup>23</sup> it is not specified in greater detail, and no particular focus is placed on German history or genocide more broadly. These themes were not prioritized in curricular guidelines and the increased coverage in textbooks must therefore be understood in relation to other factors, such as scholarly developments or broader societal debates. It appears that the authors enjoyed great freedom in terms of the emphasis placed on the subject under investigation, at least in relation to curricula. Possible explanations for this development therefore include the publication in 1961 of Raul Hillberg’s extensive and comprehensive academic study *The destruction of the European Jews*, which was published in Swedish in 1963, as well as the public trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961, which drew considerable attention to the Second World War and the Holocaust. Another possible explanation is that, whereas the earlier titles were largely rewrites or continuations of works originally published in the 1950s, new authors began publishing their first history textbooks from 1966 onwards. In addition, an entirely new series, *Folkens historia*, was launched.<sup>24</sup> This suggests that new ideas regarding textbook content became possible with new authors and new textbooks.

As seen in [Table 3](#), only one new title was introduced in the 1970s. [Table 4](#) shows that a change began to occur in the 1980s when several new titles were released but without any dramatic changes in terms of coverage. The standard that came into existence during the 1960s continued.

**Table 3.** Swedish secondary school history textbook: 1970s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Hildingson et al. (1969, 1974, two volumes), <i>Två Sekler</i> 783 p.	0.23	about 280	4 photos

**Table 4.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 1980s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Samuelson (1983, two volumes), <i>Forntid till nutid</i> 571 p.	0.04	about 90	1 photo 1 drawing
Häger (1983), <i>Grepp om historien</i> 454 p.	0.37	about 180	2 photos
Bergström et al. (1983), <i>Alla tiders historia</i> 453 p.	0.09	about 220	1 photo
Brolin et al. (1984), <i>Historiens huvudlinjer</i> 365 p.	0.18	about 100	1 photo
Bergström et al. (1989), <i>Nya Alla tiders historia</i> 376 p.	0.16	about 230	–

As is shown in [Tables 5–7](#) shows, even more new textbooks were published from the 1990s onwards. Along with an increased focus on history in secondary schools, also societal interest in the Holocaust grew, leading to a greater emphasis on the Holocaust as a school subject. This is reflected in three textbooks, where more than one percent of the text was devoted to the Holocaust, and in all textbooks during the first decade dedicated at least 0.5% of their content to the subject, which then varied during the 2010s.

**Table 5.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 1990s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Westin (1990, 1992, two volumes), <i>Människans historia</i> 440 p.	0.34	about 590	1 photo
Ekonen et al. (1993, 1994), <i>Människans vägar</i> 647 p.	0.27	about 365	1 photo 1 map of concentration camps
Elm & Thulin (1995), <i>Historia</i> 320 p.	0.23	about 130	1 photo
Sandberg et al. (1996), <i>Epos</i> 608 p.	0.45	about 1 010	3 photos 1 map of concentration camps
Skrutkowska et al. (1997), <i>Människan genom tiderna</i> 360 p.	0.35	about 375	1 photo

**Table 6.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 2000s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Sandberg et al. (2000), <i>Epos</i> 360 p.	0.95	about 540	2 photos
Elm & Thulin (2000), <i>Epok</i> 408 p.	0.5	about 375	5 photos
Nyström & Nyström (2001), <i>Perspektiv på historien A</i> 472 p.	1.48	about 2 185	4 photos 1 drawing of plan of Birkenau 1 reproduction of categorization of prisoners in concentration camps
Öhman (2007), <i>Sekvens</i> 444 p.	1.8	about 1 415	5 photos 1 map of number of killed Jews in European countries
Alm (2007), <i>Milstolpar</i> 432 p.	0.5	about 395	2 photos
Ericsson & Hansson (2009), <i>Samband historia: historia plus</i> 543 p.	2	about 3 955	5 photos
Rönnqvist & Markusson Winkvist (2009), <i>Historiens ansikte A</i> 495 p.	0.9	about 1 165	2 photos

**Table 7.** Swedish secondary school history textbooks: 2010s.

Title of textbook Number of pages	% of the book about the Holocaust	Number of words	Pictures Maps
Almgren et al. (2011), <i>Alla tidens historia 1b</i> 452 p.	0.4	about 775	1 photo 1 map with distinction between labor camps and extermination camps
Långström et al. (2012), <i>Historia 1b</i> 434 p.	0.45	about 295	1 photo
Alm & Martin Alm (2014), <i>Historia 1B</i> 414 p.	0.85	about 1 180	3 photos
Larsson (2016), <i>Möt historien 1b</i> 316 p.	1.1	about 1 100	2 photos

The observed changes in the content since the late 1990s may be explained by political action. In 1997, Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson reacted strongly to a report indicating students' alleged lack of knowledge about the Holocaust. Interpreting this as both a democratic concern and an educational failure, he launched the national information campaign, 'Living History'. Coordinated under the Government Offices with public funding, the project aimed to enhance young people's understanding of the Holocaust. One component was the publication of *Tell Ye Your Children*, a book about the Holocaust distributed free of charge in 1.5 million copies to schoolchildren across the country. In 2003, the information campaign was institutionalized through the establishment of the public agency *Forum for Living History*.<sup>25</sup> This political intervention sparked broader public and academic debate about the role of Holocaust memory in contemporary society, particularly its use as a tool to promote democratic values and combat anti-semitism. It also had a lasting impact on Holocaust education in Swedish schools.

A further development occurred in 2011 with the adoption of a new national curriculum. History was then elevated to the status of a core subject, granting it a more prominent position within the curriculum than before. The revised curriculum was more comprehensive, introducing a clearly articulated aim centered around the development of ‘historical awareness.’ The teaching was stated as being focused, among other things, on ‘Knowledge of time periods, processes of change, events and people’. Teaching was to emphasize, among other things, ‘Knowledge of historical periods, processes of change, key events, and influential individuals’. In the course History 1b, the focus on 19th- and twentieth-century history was strengthened, with explicit reference to genocide included under the category of ‘Central content.’<sup>26</sup>

A summary of the review of the textbooks shows a significant expansion of Holocaust coverage from the 1950s to the twenty-first century. In the earliest textbooks, references to the Holocaust were limited to brief mentions embedded within broader discussions of National Socialism. By the 1960s, the content became more focused and analytical, reflecting a shift toward a more investigative approach. In the 2000s, several textbooks devote over 1,000 words to the subject, allowing for more comprehensive treatments.

The use of visual material also evolved over time. No Holocaust-related photographs or illustrations appeared in the textbooks of the 1950s, but such images began to be included from the 1960s onward. However, the selection of photographs has remained largely static, with the same few images reused across multiple publications. Moreover, the pedagogical purpose of these images often remains unclear, suggesting a lack of critical engagement with their educational function.

### **3.1. Content analysis: Holocaust definition**

The IHRA guidelines has previously been referred to. Another set of guidelines of interest is that of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), established in 1993, which includes several parts in its ‘Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust’. A third is that of Yad Vashem, Israel’s official memorial and museum to the victims Holocaust since 1953, which also includes educational aspects.

Yad Vashem, the USHMM and the IHRA emphasize the importance of defining the Holocaust in an educational context. Teaching the Holocaust is complex and Gray, who focuses on Holocaust education, outlines definitional problems, such as those related to content selection and educational issues.<sup>27</sup> Lindquist emphasized the value of a comprehensive definition, arguing that

a full definition of the event can dispel incorrect prior information at the start of their students’ experience with the topic [, ... it] offers an entry into the subject’s complexity [... and it] enables students to identify the Holocaust’s intentional, process-driven structure.<sup>28</sup>

He further suggests that the textbook should provide a straightforward answer not only to the question ‘What was the Holocaust?’ but also to ‘When? Where? How? By whom and against whom? Why? and To what extent?’ While he found ‘limited elements’ of a definition, he did not find a comprehensive one in the textbooks studied, either as a glossary definition or as part of the narratives.<sup>29</sup>

When teaching about the Holocaust, the IHRA emphasizes the value of precision. The IHRA has provided a short definition of the Holocaust: ‘the state-sponsored, systematic

persecution and murder of Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945'.<sup>30</sup> The advantage of using a specific definition is to 'avoid generalizations that blur distinctions and understandings'<sup>31</sup> when introducing this sensitive topic to pupils with a general lack of knowledge on the subject. The temporal aspect, beginning in 1933 when the official persecution of the Jews by the Nazi regime started, makes it necessary to address the change in direction around 1941, when the mass murder of the Jews began.

The definition used by the USHMM is both narrow, as the first sentence is similar to the IHRA definition, and broader and more complex, as the rest of the text is more clearly linked to the historical context. The temporal aspect is the same, but the definition is broader, taking into account the many victims of Nazi persecution.

Yad Vashem also presents educational aspects, including a definition. While the USHMM considers other victims of persecution, Yad Vashem focuses exclusively on Jews.

In all three definitions, the Holocaust spans 12 years, but the latter two divide the period into two parts: the first, focusing on persecution, and the second one, starting in 1941, focusing on the mass murder of Jews.

The definitions of the three set of guidelines vary, but all point to the importance of defining the historical phenomenon we are studying. As part of the **second research question** on how the Holocaust was handled in the textbooks, the sub-question is focused on if and in what ways the Holocaust was defined?

In **older Swedish textbooks**, up until around 1995 ending with Elm & Thulin (see [Tables 1–5](#)), there is hardly any coherent definition of the Holocaust in the glossary, while parts of the USHMM and Yad Vashem definitions often appear scattered throughout the narratives. The Holocaust is mentioned during the review of German history, and sometimes a reference is made to in the section on Second World War. In general, the historical context is missing.

In one textbook of the 1950s, Holocaust is singularly mentioned in a single sentence as a factual statement, without any historical context: 'The persecution of the Jews intensified: in the end, the aim was simply to exterminate the Jews of Germany'.<sup>32</sup> A somewhat more detailed account is provided by Söderlund & Seth, who state that Jews 'were taken in large numbers [...] to concentration camps, where the majority were systematically killed in gas chambers', although the textbook do not state the number of deaths.<sup>33</sup>

Textbooks from the 1960s onwards also vary, ranging from almost no discussion or only a factual statement of the Holocaust, for instance in Brolin et al. for a more elaborate discussions describing part of the process.<sup>34</sup> For example Kumlien et al. that writes that 'concentration camps were set up [...] the persecution of the Jews took on the character of large-scale extermination'.<sup>35</sup> Less focus and space are given to the topic in textbooks during the 1980s.<sup>36</sup> During the 1990s, there are examples of less focus being placed on the subject,<sup>37</sup> while the majority of the books increased their attention to it.<sup>38</sup>

A significant change comes with some **newer textbooks**, starting with Sandberg et al. (1996) (see [Tables 5–7](#)). In addition to presenting a narrative, some textbooks, such as Nyström & Nyström and Larsson, feature recurring chapter summaries that provide glossary definitions.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the Holocaust is given a more prominent position. Sandberg et al. (1996) used as a heading 'The extermination of the Jews,' devoting a great deal of space to describing the Holocaust.<sup>40</sup> Sandberg et al. (2000) is almost

identical to the 1996 version, except that the section describing the actual genocide is renamed to 'Förintelsen', i.e. 'The Holocaust'.<sup>41</sup> Since the mid-1990s, the Holocaust has been referred to by its Swedish name, 'Förintelsen', in textbooks and has since appeared as a heading in the textbooks studied, making it an established part of the course content reflected in the textbooks.

Thus, a summary of the review of the textbooks shows that as more focus began to be directed at the Holocaust in the mid-1990s, more emphasis was placed on defining and naming it. From statements of fact without historical context, it became possible to present it in a broader context.

There are quite a few examples of the Nazi-German public euphemism 'Final Solution' (translated into Swedish as 'slutgiltiga lösningen' from the German 'die Endlösung') in textbooks published in the 1980s until 2017.<sup>42</sup> In agreement with Gray,<sup>43</sup> it may be seen as problematic to use the term 'Final Solution' as a synonym for the Holocaust, as appears to be the case in the mentioned textbooks. This is because the term's meaning is less precise and functions as an innocuous word meant to disguise the brutal reality.

### **3.2. IHRA and the importance of antisemitism**

The didactic 'what'-question is clearly articulated by the IHRA: 'What to teach: core historical content'.<sup>44</sup> The importance of antisemitism is emphasized as an answer to the 'what'-question because it was 'an essential factor that made the Holocaust possible',<sup>45</sup> but also as it continues to be a persistent ideology in contemporary societies. Recognizing that 'antisemitism' is a scholarly 'contested concept' in terms of definition and distinctions,<sup>46</sup> the IHRA's guidance is nevertheless followed. The IHRA outlines 'precursors' to the Holocaust, offering both a broader historical perspective that includes anti-Judaism, antisemitism, and racism, as well as a narrower perspective linked to the outcome of the First World War.

The IHRA has produced a working definition of antisemitism:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. (IHRA 2016; IHRA 2019:44, 54)

The IHRA proposes several rationales for the teaching and learning about the Holocaust, antisemitism, and Nazi ideology in schools.<sup>47</sup> The Holocaust was instrumental in the modern development of the human rights norms and values. Studying the process that led to the Holocaust might help to understand similar processes occurring in the present day. Neo-Nazism persisted after the Second World War, though it remained relevant primarily to smaller right-wing groups. However, these groups expanded after the end of the Cold War and grew in number and influence in the early twenty-first century. Similarly, antisemitism and its ideology have become more accessible with the advent of social media, which allows for the anonymous spread of messages and ideologies. This is true also for Sweden, but while the studied Swedish textbooks do not treat antisemitism as an ideology of importance in contemporary times, it is still valid to investigate its use, as it remains an 'essential factor' when discussing the Holocaust.

The question is which aspect or part of the complicated concept of anti-Semitism is appropriate to use in a textbook? Rees Jones takes for instance a long-term perspective and argues that antisemitism ‘played a profound role in the foundation of western society.’<sup>48</sup> In the later Roman Empire, theological criticism of Judaism, ‘anti-Judaism’, evolved into a broader hostility toward Jews as a people. This shift marked the emergence of what is now termed antisemitism, though the term itself is problematic. It conflates religious, racial, economic, and political factors into one label, often masking historical nuance.

In medieval Northern Europe, religious divisions intensified into social and political isolation. Violent outbreaks, such as the pogroms in Worms (1096), the Reindfleisch massacres (from 1298), and accusations linking Jews to the Black Death (1346 onwards), illustrate this shift. By the late Middle Ages, Jews faced segregation and expulsion in many Christian states.<sup>49</sup>

William Brustein offers a broader framework, identifying four ‘roots’ of antisemitism: religious, racial, economic, and political. Like Rees Jones, he sees religious antisemitism as deeply embedded in European history.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, he also highlights the rise of racial antisemitism in the late nineteenth century, when pseudo-scientific theories, based on ‘physical’ anthropology and eugenics, classified Jews as an inferior race with fixed physical and psychological traits. This racial thinking spread alongside European nationalism and colonialism, and gained momentum with the westward migration of Eastern European Jews after 1881. These immigrants, often poor and visibly different, became easy targets of the emerging racial stereotypes.<sup>51</sup>

Economic antisemitism, according to Brustein, has roots in the Middle Ages, when Jews were restricted from most professions and concentrated in finance. In modern times, families like the Rothschilds became symbols of Jewish financial power. During economic downturns, such as the 1873 depression or the Great Depression of 1929, Jews were scapegoated, leading to widespread ‘economic antipathy toward Jews.’<sup>52</sup>

Political antisemitism emerged in response to the visibility of Jews in socialist and communist movements. The in Russia forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1903) gave a conspiratorial framework to these fears, offering ‘to many non-Jews an explanation and a scapegoat for the chaos’ after the First World War and the Russian Revolution.<sup>53</sup>

While the history of antisemitism in Europe is complex, the situation in Germany was particular and led to a much more widespread and intense antisemitism. Gutman argues that racism was a ‘central component’ of Nazi antisemitism and political ideology and a ‘determining factor’ in the mass murder.<sup>54</sup> Wistrich emphasizes the combination of Christian anti-Jewish doctrines and biological racism in Hitler’s articulation of a radical antisemitism with the goal of annihilating the Jews, which was ultimately translated into the Nazi policy of extermination.<sup>55</sup> Saul Friedländer introduced the concept of ‘redemptive antisemitism’,<sup>56</sup> which encompasses the ideological and material preconditions for the Holocaust.

As the historical overview above shows, the background of antisemitism is extensive and the issue itself highly complex. This makes it difficult to use the concept with pedagogical precision. Antisemitism can be understood as a form of racism, yet perhaps more accurately as an ideology. The IHRA’s presentation also appears to view antisemitism as a necessary precondition for the Holocaust. In academic literature, interpretations

differ depending on disciplinary perspective. A central question is which choices and representations of antisemitism's significance in German history and its role in the Holocaust school textbooks can reasonably include.

### **3.3. Content analysis: representations of the Holocaust in Swedish secondary school history textbooks**

The **second research question** broadens the focus: How is the Holocaust addressed in the reviewed textbooks including how it was presented, described, and explained?

In the **older textbooks** studied, up until around 1995, antisemitism is barely mentioned, with more focus on Nazism and its ideology. Antisemitism is conceptualized in a way that leads to an understanding of it as a 'short history of antisemitism',<sup>57</sup> something contemporary with the Nazi populist movement, rather than as a two-millennia-long history of European persecution of Jews.

The five textbooks from the 1950s do not always mention the Holocaust and give little or no attention to antisemitism. When the Holocaust is mentioned, it's usually when discussing German history and how the Nazis came to power, rather than in relation to the Second World War. An example is provided by Söderlund & Seth, where Nazi ideology is the focus. It is described as a nationalist ideology, and Jews were not considered part of the nation. 'Hate speech against the *Jews*' became a central element of the propaganda. Antisemitism became a tool to use in a political situation: 'Hitler was able to tap into old antisemitic views and channel the politically and economically driven dissatisfaction in Germany onto the Jewish minority'.<sup>58</sup>

Textbooks from the 1960s also devote little space for the subject, with two exceptions. The Holocaust is mentioned mainly as part in the section on German history and briefly in the section on the Second World War. Antisemitism is not always mentioned; instead, racism is presented as the historical context for the Holocaust. When antisemitism is addressed, it is formulated within the context of racism, reducing antisemitism to merely a form of racism. One exception to this pattern is Matsson & Degerman, who presents an essay of about 560 words detailing the history of antisemitism and how it led to the Holocaust. This is a unique approach. Also the vocabulary is more varied and precise in that 'concentration camp' is used in relation to what are otherwise known as extermination camp (the Swedish word used is 'dödsfabrik,' or 'death factory').<sup>59</sup>

More substantial discussions include concepts like 'terror' and 'political conformity,' which may be seen as parts of the fascist ideology. One presentation, by Borg & Nordell, discusses terror in the context of racial thinking and political conformity: terror was directed against those who challenged the Nazi fascist policy of conformity.<sup>60</sup> Hildingsson et al. continue this approach with the subtitle 'Conformity and Terror', noting that the persecution of Jews was part of this, later escalating to mass murder.<sup>61</sup> The same approach is taken by Bergström (1983) et al., who, under the heading 'Conformity and Racial Extermination,' state that '[t]error against Jews and opponents of Nazism became increasingly systematic, culminating in systematic extermination during the Second World War'.<sup>62</sup>

Antisemitism is more developed in the single textbook of the 1970s and can be said to be on a par with racism when describing Nazi ideology. The general Nazi policy is described, as in earlier textbooks, as one of conformity and terror, of which the

persecution of the Jews was a part. A process is described with terror from 1933 developing into extermination during the war; this process perspective, the change over time, is a new element in the textbooks studied. Like the previous title, this one also employs a more developed vocabulary, distinguishing between 'concentration camps' and 'extermination camps'.<sup>63</sup>

The textbooks of the 1980s are partly similar to earlier ones. Several textbooks from this period link the Holocaust to the Nazi policy of conformity, but they focus even more on the ideology of racism. One of the textbooks includes a section entitled 'Conformity and Racial Eradication,' which eventually led to 'planned extermination'.<sup>64</sup> The Holocaust is mainly discussed as part of the section on German history, and racism is mainly used to explain the Holocaust, while the importance of antisemitism is minimized.

An example of antisemitism being used as a kind of explanation, but without defining it or providing historical context, can be found in Skrutkowska et al.: 'It was only in the final stages of the war that the consequences of antisemitism became known. The executioners showed no remorse'.<sup>65</sup> This is also an example of how it sometimes seems to be assumed that this concept is common knowledge, without the need for a definition or historical contextualization.

There are some visible changes. In Häger the focus is on the Nazi rise to power and the transformation of society. The changing conditions for Jews in the 1930s are exemplified by the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. The reference to racism is toned down, while the antisemitic notion of a Jewish conspiracy is introduced: 'The Nazis saw in Jewry the rise of internationalism, liberalism, capitalism, Marxism and everything else they considered evil'.<sup>66</sup> This is one example where the antisemitic idea of a Jewish conspiracy appears in the textbooks examined; another older example is Lindberg et al.<sup>67</sup>

In Bergström et al. (1989), antisemitism receives slightly more attention, with sections addressing its history, including medieval Christian attacks on Judaism and, forms of discrimination that led to professions in trade, moneylending and finance.<sup>68</sup> However, Bergström et al. (1989) reduces antisemitism to Hitler's personal history, claiming that he encountered it in Vienna before the war and was able to spread his message in Munich after the war.<sup>69</sup> This contrasts with the views of professional historians, who emphasize the widespread antisemitism in Germany before the war and as a reaction to setbacks during and after the war. Gutman, for example, describes Nazi antisemitism as a 'reaction to the contradictions and dissatisfaction evident in German society since the middle of the previous century'.<sup>70</sup>

This perspective changes during the 1990s, when the racism inherent in Nazi ideology becomes the primary context for understanding the Holocaust. This period also presents more extensive history of different factors that led to the genocide.<sup>71</sup> Sandberg et al. (1996) represent a new direction in the textbooks studied, as the Weimar Republic and the Nazi rise to power are given relatively large space. Antisemitism is subordinated and integrated into Nazi ideology, which is described with headings like 'A suicidal ideology?' and 'Murdering their own', referring to the mass murder and eventual extermination of Jews. A peculiar feature is thus that parts of the antisemitism are described but without naming them as such. There is also some psychologizing, for example, when the 'self-destructive trait' of Nazism and the 'willingness to do anything to avoid confronting one's own weakness' are presented as aspects of Nazi ideology. The concept

of antisemitism seems even more ambiguous when Jews are described as ‘some of the best and most viable in their own country’.<sup>72</sup> Another example of psychologizing can be found in a section that unconvincingly suggests that ‘the German child-rearing was unusually violent and centered on the blind subjugation of children’ as a cause of Nazism<sup>73</sup> and indirectly also to the genocide.

The new century brought with it some changes. A new textbook from 2001, titled *Perspectives on history*, represents a change in the content and organization of the material on the Holocaust. A chapter summary provides a clear definition of the genocide, and the section on the Holocaust is presented as a separate part of a chapter, following the section on the Second World War.<sup>74</sup>

The textbook presents Nazi ideology and antisemitism separately, contextualizing the former as part of the transition from democracy to dictatorship during the inter-war period in Europe. It also explains why and how the extreme right and the Nazi organization managed to gain power in 1933 and then reorganize German society.<sup>75</sup>

The section on ‘The Holocaust’<sup>76</sup> covers the history of antisemitism from a religious perspective, examining the medieval part, including the persecution and dispersion of Jews throughout Europe. The emancipation of Jews in Western Europe is presented alongside the influences of the Social Darwinism and the inclusion of race in the antisemitic belief system. The gradual process from the imprisonment of Jews to genocide is aptly portrayed.

*Perspectives on history* showed an improvement in the handling of the Holocaust. However, the perspectives vary from textbook to textbook during the first decade of the new century. One textbook moves directly from the end of the First World War to the Nazi rise to power without mentioning the Weimar Republic.<sup>77</sup> The presentation is personalized by emphasizing the importance of Hitler. The persecution of Jews is linked to the racial doctrine in Nazi ideology. Although antisemitism is briefly mentioned, it is without definition or context. It is introduced as ‘Hitler’s personal hatred of the Jewish people made anti-Semitism a central part of the Nazi worldview’.<sup>78</sup> This suggests that Hitler was the cause of antisemitism, when, in fact, he was the product of the general antisemitic trends in Europe.

One textbook from 2017, published by a prestigious book publisher, presents parts of the history of antisemitism throughout the textbook<sup>79</sup> before subsuming it as part of ‘The Ideas of Nazism’ and then specifically linking it to the racial perspective. The Holocaust is thus explained in terms of Nazism, rather than antisemitism. At the same time, the main part of the section deals with the background of the genocide, presenting a gradual and increasingly repressive anti-Jewish policy.<sup>80</sup>

With some exceptions, the Holocaust is not typically explained as a form of antisemitism that developed and was formulated as a historical phenomenon within a European context over two millennia, nor is it commonly portrayed as a pervasive part of Nazism. Confirming Syse’s conclusions,<sup>81</sup> representations of the causes of the Holocaust take different directions. In some accounts, the driving force of antisemitism is linked to the figure of Hitler. One such perspective reduces antisemitism to Hitler’s personal history, suggesting that he encountered it in Vienna during his younger years and then propagated it in Germany after the First World War. The function of this view is to reduce the mass phenomenon of antisemitism to an individual, resulting in an undue focus on just one person.

One example may serve to illustrate this point. The emphasis on the role of the individual can be associated with the debate concerning intentionalist versus functionalist explanations. In one textbook, reference is made to Adolf Hitler's speech in the Reichstag on January 30, 1939, in which he mentioned the annihilation of the Jews. This is followed by a citation from Joseph Goebbels' diary entry of December 12, 1941, which records Hitler's remarks on the subject in a meeting with Nazi leaders. Finally, a passage from the Wannsee Protocol of January 20, 1942, is presented.<sup>82</sup> From this sequence of sources, the authors obviously means that that Hitler's personal responsibility is evident. Consequently, a broader discussion of German responsibility is regarded as unnecessary.

The most common explanation, however, reduces antisemitism to a form of racism. This approach is problematic, as the concept and history of race itself is incomplete and insufficiently explained in textbooks, offering limited explanatory value. Despite this, antisemitism is often categorized as one of several racist ideologies, albeit one specifically targeting Jews. When Nazi rule began reshaping Germany into a homogeneous and streamlined society, Jews became the primary target. Other groups, such as Slavic peoples, were also targeted by racist ideologies, particularly as German military expansion spread eastward.

While racism is an element of antisemitism, following the concept of 'redemptive anti-semitism,' the latter is a broader ideology: 'the struggle against the Jews is the dominant aspect of a worldview'.<sup>83</sup> Under Nazi rule, antisemitism became a central explanation for the many problems of Weimar society and was presented as a course of action for solving those issues, which involved combating Jews and their purported world conspiracy.

### ***3.4. Agency of the Jewish victims in Swedish history textbooks***

The **third question**, to what extent are the victims granted agency in the textbooks under examination, refers to one of several aspects suggested by IHRA in response to the didactic 'what'-question. One of these is answering the question, 'How did Jews respond to persecution and mass murder?'<sup>84</sup> Thus, how do Swedish secondary school history textbooks address the proposal to present the Holocaust not only from 'the perspective of the perpetrators' sources, actions or narratives,' but also to portray the Jewish victims 'on the historical stage as individuals and communities with their own contexts and histories rather than as passive objects to be murdered en masse'? In short, how do these textbooks allow 'learners [to] recognize that the victims had agency?'<sup>85</sup>

Foster and Burgess studied four history textbooks used in English schools. They focused among other things on what they called the 'perpetrator-oriented narrative',<sup>86</sup> which makes Jewish people objects rather than subjects in the historical narrative. They found non or limited material on Jewish culture, life, perspectives, testimonies, but instead, there were photographs of Jewish victims in the camps. The overall result was a presentation of Jews as 'silent and anonymous victims of the Holocaust [appearing as a mass] only to be persecuted and murdered'.<sup>87</sup> What about Swedish textbooks in this area? Do they deal with Jewish life and an effective relationship to the Holocaust?

The textbooks of the 1950s does not present Jewish life or living in the Germany society. There are not many photographs, but several examples depict Mussolini making the fascist salute and Hitler performing his own salute when portrayed as

heads of state. The photographs portray these individuals as powerful individuals who rule with singular power. There are later examples of this, especially one where Hitler is portrayed as an imposing leadership figure in front of the text 'Ein Volk. Ein Reich. Ein Führer'.<sup>88</sup> Things change in the 1960s. The textbook by Kumlien et al. from 1963 contains no photographs of Jewish victims,<sup>89</sup> but photographs become more common in textbooks from the latter part of the 1960s. From this point, photographs began to portray emaciated and malnourished Jewish victims from the concentration camps.<sup>90</sup> There are even two instances with photographs depicting a more explicit nudity: one photograph from Dachau of a naked man with visible genitals placed inside an incinerator,<sup>91</sup> which was later used again in greater detail,<sup>92</sup> giving a dehumanizing impression.

Several photographs from the Warsaw Ghetto are included in several textbooks.<sup>93</sup> One picture from Buchenwald shows emaciated and malnourished Jewish victims,<sup>94</sup> and one textbook includes a photograph from Auschwitz-Birkenau of children forced into penal servitude.<sup>95</sup>

There is one case where photographs could be interpreted as describing a process, from making a victim to execution to liberation. Öhman includes five photographs, all depicting victims: one showing deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943, another of a young woman in Lemberg in July 1941 being persecuted and humiliated, a third featuring a pile of glasses belonging to executed prisoners at Auschwitz in April 1945, a fourth showing on the railway platform at Auschwitz in June 1944, and a fifth emaciated and malnourished Jewish victims at Buchenwald in April 1945 after the liberation.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, Nyström & Nyström chose to show Jews as victims, emaciated and malnourished, but also as survivors who were liberated, in this case from the Ebensee concentration camp in Austria.<sup>97</sup>

Images from the camps almost invariably depict Jews as passive objects. Although some sources present voices from the perpetrators during the genocide, few include testimonies from Jewish survivors. One example of a perpetrator quotation is from the war diary of an *Einsatzgruppe*, a paramilitary death squad, describing aspects of its operations in murdering Jews. A photograph shows the execution of a Jewish man beside a mass grave into which his body would be thrown, thereby illustrating the work of the *Einsatzgruppe*.<sup>98</sup> While one textbook cites the Auschwitz commandant on camp conditions<sup>99</sup> and another reproduces his account of the method of killing by gassing,<sup>100</sup> no testimonies from Jewish victims at Auschwitz are included. As stated earlier, the perspectives of victims are seldom preserved in the textbooks used. A rare example of their voices being presented in some way appears in a caption accompanying a photograph from the Buchenwald concentration camp, which notes that one man depicted later settled in Sweden. He is cited as recalling his time in the camp: 'I could not think. Fear was the only emotion I felt.'<sup>101</sup>

In general, the Swedish textbooks examined align with the content of the textbooks used in English schools. There are many examples of images depicting Jews as victims in ghettos or concentration camps. The photographs are accompanied by brief captions describing the content. Jews are mostly portrayed as a silent and powerless group, incapable of escaping what befell them. The only exception is when photographs of survivors are shown, in which individual expressions of self-awareness and resilience can be seen. Given the wealth of available material, including music, stories, diaries, and memoirs, it would be relatively easy for future textbook authors to highlight the Jewish voice and agency.

## 4. Discussion

Three questions have guided the research process. The first question concerned when and to what extent the Holocaust was mentioned in the textbooks. The survey results show unequivocally that more and more space in the examined textbooks is being devoted to this subject area. This is to some part the result of political interest in strengthening school teaching in this area but also because of changes in curricula.

The second question concerned how the Holocaust is described and explained, particularly in connection to the role of antisemitism. The results align with previous research. Like the studies by Bruchfeld and Löwengart, this study shows that Jewish history and social life in Europe and Germany were not given much space in textbooks. The same was true for racism and Nazism. Additionally, antisemitism has been presented briefly and without a historical background.

At the same time, there is a clear change during the first decade of the new century, with more space and attention being devoted to the Holocaust. The exploration of the subject has developed to the point where antisemitism is increasingly discussed.

The result has previously been explained in terms of political action. The establishment of the 'Forum for Living History' (The Living History Forum, LHF) in 1997 can be seen as partly a result of increased state interest in influencing education, and partly as part of international trends to develop Holocaust education.

It is worth noting that the IHRA not only emphasizes the importance of antisemitism in explaining the Holocaust, but also highlights its persistence as an ideology in contemporary societies, underscoring the importance of addressing it. However, this latter aspect is not presented in the examined textbooks. The only reason to address antisemitism seems to be its major explanatory value in the context of the Holocaust. Most textbook authors appear to believe that it is of greater value to focus on the Nazi regime and its actions. This is a reasonable course of action, as ideologies alone do not commit genocide; rather, groups and organizations, usually within the framework of state action, do.

The third question concerned the issue of agency, whether the voices of the victims were heard. Historically, they have not been, and the same applies to the present. No significant change has occurred over the decades in the textbooks that have been examined. Starting in the 1960s, grim photographs of defenseless people and dead bodies were published. Despite the abundance of testimonies and evidence about what happened, the 'perpetrator-oriented narrative' still dominates. At the same time, this is something that could easily be remedied, given the vast amount of material available. This material could be used to address not only what happened during the genocide but also to describe Jewish life before and after it.

Swedish textbooks do not explicitly reference the IHRA guidelines. In practice, there are connections to certain parts of the guide, while other sections are absent. In particular, content corresponding to the sections 'Post-war: Immediate Aftermath' and 'Conceptual Understanding' is largely missing. The latter includes important subtopics such as 'Responsibility,' 'Agency of the Victims,' and 'Relevance of the Holocaust for Contemporary Issues.' Incorporating these elements would require some expansion of current textbooks, though the extent of such revisions should not be overstated. For instance, presenting the victims' perspectives could be achieved with relatively modest adjustments, given the wealth of available material.

It is worth noting that many Swedish textbooks are authored by practicing teachers. Consequently, decisions about whether to expand Holocaust-related content ultimately rest with commercial publishers and educators themselves.

## 5. Conclusion

Ammert has proposed a typology for how textbooks present content, distinguishing between four types: ascertaining, explanatory, reflective/analytical, and normative. An ascertaining presentation reports and confirms the occurrence of events, addressing the questions of what happened, when, and where. An explanatory presentation provides background and causal analysis, answering why events occurred. A reflective/analytical presentation explores meaning and engages with various theoretical perspectives. Finally, a normative presentation conveys values and moral judgments.<sup>102</sup>

With some risk of overgeneralization, it may be argued that older Swedish textbooks tend to emphasize the transmission of historical facts. While elements of explanation and analysis are present, these texts primarily function as repositories of information about the past.

However, there are notable exceptions from the 1960s. Matsson & Degerman (1967) presented a well-articulated essay on the history of antisemitism and its connection to the Holocaust, combining factual description with causal explanation and reflective analysis. Similarly, Bäcklin et al. (1968) addressed Jewish history in an essay that connected European Jewish experiences with the emergence of Zionism and the founding of Israel.<sup>103</sup>

Among more recent textbooks, there is evidence of greater sophistication in content presentation. For instance, Nyström & Nyström (2001) offer a textbook section under the heading 'How was it possible?' that exemplifies both reflective/analytical and normative content. This section engages with questions concerning German responsibility, the role of indoctrination, and the function of bureaucracy in enabling genocide.<sup>104</sup> Also Ericsson & Hansson (2009) stand out. Their textbook is the only one that contains a section entitled 'Genocide,' which encourages a comparative view of the Holocaust. A comparatively focused presentation and discussion of genocides, of which the Holocaust can be emphasized, is a constructive pedagogical development. Notably, this is also the only example in the sample that introduces the historiographical debate between functionalism and intentionalism. This section also offers an overview of various explanatory perspectives, raising the analytical level of the presentation.<sup>105</sup>

It is noteworthy that the deregulated Swedish textbook market has enabled the publication of a diverse range of textbooks. Within the same decade, publishers have produced both simplified textbook content, corresponding to what Ammert describes as declarative content, and more complex works with diversified and sophisticated approaches. As a result, teachers now have access to a wider selection of textbooks, which allows for greater adaptation to different pedagogical goals.

### Textbooks

#### 1950s

Bäcklin, Martin, Erik Holmberg, Waldemar Lendin & Hugo Valentin. *Allmän historia för gymnasiet*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell/Geber, 1954.

Dannert, Leif & Waldemar Lendin. *Världen och vi: allmän och svensk historia för 3- och 4-årig realskola*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1958.

Jacobson, Gustaf & Ernst Söderlund. *Lärobok i allmän historia för gymnasiet. 1*. Stockholm: Sv. bokförl., 1955, 4. uppl. 8. tr.

Lindberg, Folke, Wilhelm Tham & Karl Thunell. *Världshistoria 1 Antikens historia*. Stockholm, 1955.

Lindberg, Folke, Wilhelm Tham & Karl Thunell. *Världshistoria 2 Medeltidens och nya tidens historia: till 1700-talets mitt*. Stockholm, 1956.

Lindberg, Folke, Wilhelm Tham & Karl Thunell. *Världshistoria 3 Nya tidens historia: från 1700-talets mitt*. Stockholm, 1956.

Söderlund, Ernst & Ivar Seth. *Allmän historia för gymnasiet*. Stockholm: Svenska bokförlaget (Bonnier), 1956.

### **1960s**

Borg, Ivan & Erik Nordell. *Historia för gymnasiet Årskurs 1*. Stockholm: AVCarlsons, 1967.

Borg, Ivan & Erik Nordell. *Historia för gymnasiet Årskurs 2* [Hum-Sh-Na]. Stockholm: Läromedelsförlagen, 1967.

Brolin, Per-Erik, Leif Dannert & Åke Holmberg. *Allmän och nordisk historia för gymnasiet: Norden från äldsta tid och den övriga världen från år 1000*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1963.

Bäcklin, Martin, Sten Carlsson, Waldemar Lendin & Hugo Valentin. *Historia för gymnasiet: allmän och nordisk historia efter år 1000*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1962.

Kumlien, Kjell, Folke Lindberg & Wilhelm Tham, *Historia för gymnasiet*. Stockholm: Sv. bokförl. / Norstedt, 1963.

Matsson, Ragnar. *Historia 1 [Åk 1.] Tiden 1000-1789*. Stockholm: Liber, 1966.

Matsson, Ragnar & Allan Degerman, *Historia 2 Hum. Sh. Na. [Åk 2-3]: Tiden efter 1789*. Stockholm: Liber, 1967. The title page identifies Ragnar Matsson as the principal author with overall responsibility for the book. Allan Degerman is included as an author in the references, as the foreword explains that he wrote the chapter on the world wars, which is the focus of the analysis in this paper.

Tham, Wilhelm, Kjell Kumlien & Kjell Lindberg, *Folkens historia: lärobok för gymnasiet I*. Stockholm, 1967.

Tham, Wilhelm, Kjell Kumlien & Kjell Lindberg, *Folkens historia: lärobok för gymnasiet. 2*. Stockholm, 1968.

### **1970s**

Hildingson, Lars, Gunnar Kjellin, Gunnar T Westin & Alf Åberg. *Fyra epoker: lärobok i historia för gymnasiet åk. 1*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1969.

Hildingson, Lars, Gunnar Kjellin, Gunnar T Westin & Alf Åberg. *Två Sekler. Lärobok i historia för gymnasieskolan. 3- och 4-årig linje, åk 2-3. A*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1972.

### **1980s**

Bergström, Börje, Arne Löwgren & Hans Almgren, *Alla tiders historia. Grundbok i historia för gymnasieskolans humanistiska och samhällsvetenskapliga linjer*. Stockholm: LiberLäromedel, 1983.

Bergström, Börje, Arne Löwgren & Hans Almgren, *Nya Alla tiders historia. Grundbok i historia för gymnasieskolan*. Stockholm: Liber, 1989.

Brolin, Per-Erik, Åke Holmberg & Leif Dannert, *Historiens huvudlinjer: historia för gymnasieskolan. 3 ENT*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell läromedel, 1984.

Häger, Bengt Åke. *Grepp om historien*. Lund: Studentlitt. 1983.

Samuelson, Sven. *Forntid till nutid: historia för gymnasieskolan. 1*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1982.

Samuelson, Sven. *Forntid till nutid: historia för gymnasieskolan. 2*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1983.

### 1990s

Bergström, Börje, Hans Almgren & Arne Löwgren. *Nya Alla tiders historia. Grundbok i historia för gymnasieskolan*. Malmö: Liber, 1998, 3. uppl.

Ekonen, Jouni, Vilho Kulju & Terttu Matsinen, *Människans vägar 1. Från folkvandringstiden till industrialismen*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1993.

Ekonen, Jouni, Vilho Kulju, & Terttu Matsinen, *Människans vägar 2. Sverige från 1809 och allmän historia från imperialismen till våra dagar*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1994.

Elm, Sten & Birgitta Thulin, *Historia: Kurs A*. Malmö: Interskol, 1995, 1. uppl.

Sandberg, Robert, Per-Arne Karlsson, Karl Molin & Ann-Sofie Ohlander. *Epos: historia: för gymnasieskolans kurs A och B*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1996.

Skrutkowska, Karin, Jan Stattin, Gunnar T Westin & Torbjörn Norman. *Människan genom tiderna. Historia för gymnasiet. A-kursen*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1997, 1. uppl.

Westin, Gunnar T. *Människans historia: lärobok i historia för gymnasieskolan. 1*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1990.

Westin, Gunnar T. *Människans historia: lärobok i historia för gymnasieskolan. 2 1815-1945*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1992.

### 2000s

Alm, Lars-Göran. *Milstolpar. Historia A*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2007.

Elm, Sten & Birgitta Thulin. *Epok: historia. Kurs A*. Malmö: Interskol, 2000.

Ericsson, Niklas & Magnus Hansson. *Samband historia: historia plus*. Stockholm: Bonnier utbildning, 2009.

Nyström, Hans & Örjan Nyström. *Perspektiv på historien A*. Malmö: Gleerup, 2001.

Rönnqvist, Carina & Hanna Markusson Winkvist, *Historiens ansikte [A]*. Stockholm: Liber, 2009, 1. uppl.

Sandberg, Robert, Per-Arne Karlsson, Karl Molin & Ann-Sofie Ohlander. *Epos: historia: för gymnasieskolans kurs A*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000.

Öhman, Christer. *Sekvens Historia A*. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2007.

### 2010s

Alm, Anna & Martin Alm, *Historia 1B Historiens landskap: kungar och karnevaler* (Lund: NA, 2014)

Almgren, Hans, Börje Bergström & Arne Löwgren, *Alla tiders historia 1b*. Malmö: Gleerups, 2011. Sjunde tryckningen 2020.

Elm, Sten & Birgitta Thulin, *Epok: historia. 1b*. Limhamn: Interskol, 2011, 2a uppl.

Ericsson, Niklas & Magnus Hansson, *Samband historia 1b*. Sanoma utbildning, 2017. Andra upplagan.

Larsson, Olle. *Möt historien 1b*. Malmö: Gleerups, 2016.

## Notes

1. According to a parliamentary decision on December 19, 2023, pupils' access to learning materials will be strengthened. Access to textbooks is described as a matter of rights for pupils but also as support for teachers. "Stärkt tillgång till läromedel."
2. Mattlar, *Läromedel som didaktisk resurs*, 34–8.
3. Hilberg, *The destruction of the European Jews*.
4. Gross, "No Longer Estranged."
5. Skolöverstyrelsen, *Läroplan för gymnasiet* [Lgy 65], 190.
6. Skolöverstyrelsen, *Läroplan för gymnasiet* [Lgy 70 II], 297.
7. Bruchfeld, "Öga för öga, tand för tand ..."<sup>16</sup> 32–4.
8. Löwengart, *Bilden av antisemitismen och Förintelsen i svenska läromedel i historia*, 32–3, 46.
9. Nicholls, "Methods in School Textbook Research."
10. Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook*, "Methods and categories for analysis," 66–79.
11. Krippendorff, *Content Analysis*, 384–6.
12. Widén, "Kvalitativ textanalys," 199–206; the quote is from IHRA, see footnote 21.
13. International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*. Several other suggested guidelines are available, for instance the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, USHMM, "Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust." These two guidelines are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Another set of guidelines are given by UNESCO, *Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide: A policy guide* while an academic discussion on Holocaust education is available in UNESCO, *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*, ed. Karel Fracapane and Matthias Haß. UNESCO.
14. Foster & Burgess, "Problematic Portrayals and Contentious Content"; Foster & Karayianni, "Portrayals of the Holocaust in English History"; Pettigrew, "Why teach or learn about the Holocaust?"; Adamson, "From theory to Praxis in Genocide Education."
15. Adamson, "From Theory to Praxis in Genocide Education," 22.
16. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 16–21.
17. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 20.
18. Loeffler, "Så gick det till när 'Förintelsen' kom till Sverige."
19. SAOB, FÖRINTA.
20. Bergström et al., 265–6. This is the third edition of a title published in 1989.
21. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 4, 7, 16, 25, 45.
22. Lindberg et al., *Världshistoria 3 Nya tidens historia*, 207–8.
23. Skolöverstyrelsen, *Läroplan för gymnasiet* [Lgy 65], 179; Skolöverstyrelsen, *Läroplan för gymnasiet* [Lgy 70 II], 290.
24. According to what can be found in Libris, Ragnar Matsson, Erik Nordell and Ivan Borg published their first history textbooks in 1966.
25. Gerner & Karlsson, *Folkmordens historia*, 323–2. Bruchfeld & Levine. ... om detta må ni berätta ... ; *Tell ye your children*.
26. Skolverket. *Läroplan* [Gy 2011], 66, 73.
27. Gray, *Teaching the Holocaust*, 1–8.
28. Lindquist, "The Coverage of the Holocaust in High School History Textbooks," 298.
29. *Ibid.*, 298–9.
30. HRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 4, 7, 16, 25, 45.
31. *Ibid.*, 24.
32. Dannert & Lendin, *Världen och vi*, 294.
33. Söderlund & Seth. *Allmän historia för gymnasiet*, 435.
34. Brodin et al., *Allmän och nordisk historia för gymnasiet*, 488; see also Samuelson, *Forntid till nutid*, 357 and Tham et al., 537.
35. Kumlien et al., *Historia för gymnasiet*, quote 378. See also Matsson & Degerman, *Historia 2*, 244, 281–2; Hildingsson et al., *Två Sekler*, 257, 316–8.

36. Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 357–358; Brolin et al., *Historiens huvudlinjer*, 296; Samuelson *Forntid till nutid*; Bergström et al., *Alla tiders historia*, 264, 277.
37. Elm & Thulin, *Historia*, 240.
38. Westin, *Människans historia*, 405, 436–7; Skrutkowska et al., *Människan genom tiderna*, 287; Ekonen et al., *Människans vägar 2*, 174–5.
39. Nyström & Nyström, *Perspektiv på historien A*, 363; Larsson, *Möt historien 1b*, 221.
40. Sandberg et al., *Epos* (1996), 486–7.
41. Sandberg et al., *Epos* (2000), 282–3.
42. Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 357; Westin, *Människans historia*, 405, 436–7; Ekonen et al., *Människans vägar 2*, 175; Skrutkowska et al., *Människan genom tiderna*, 287; Elm & Thulin, *Epok*, 295; Larsson, *Möt historien 1b*, 199; and Ericsson & Hansson, *Samband historia 1b*, 507–8 as a subheading.
43. Gray, *Teaching the Holocaust*, 1.
44. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 16.
45. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 12.
46. Pearce et al., “Antisemitism and Holocaust Education,” 152–4.
47. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 12–3.
48. Rees Jones, “The Roots of Antisemitism,” 11.
49. *Ibid.*, 21–2.
50. Brustein, *Roots of hate*, 49–58.
51. *Ibid.*, 95–116.
52. *Ibid.*, 177–89, quotation 188.
53. *Ibid.*, 265–78, quotation 276.
54. Gutman, “On the character of Nazi Antisemitism,” 357–61, quotation, 357.
55. Wistrich, *Antisemitism*, 66–67.
56. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 73–113.
57. This is the opposite of the concept of a “long history of antisemitism,” which is borrowed from Pearce et al., 158, 159, 161.
58. Söderlund & Seth, *Allmän historia för gymnasiet*, 434.
59. Matsson & Degerman, *Historia 2*, 243–45. The other exception is Bäcklin et al., 309–10, which presents an essay of about 510 words on the history of the Jewish people, including European anti-Judaism. The authors are unknown in both cases, but among the authors of Bäcklin et al. are two well-known history professors, including Hugo Valentin, who specialized in Jewish history in Sweden, wrote on the mass murder of Jews during the Second World War, and also studied antisemitism.
60. Borg & Nordell, *Historia för gymnasiet Årskurs 2*, 458–9.
61. Hildingson et al., *Två Sekler*, 257, 316–8.
62. Bergström (1983) et al., *Alla tiders historia*, 319.
63. Hildingson et al., *Två Sekler*, 257, 316, 318.
64. Bergström (1989) et al., *Nya Alla tiders historia*, 265–6, quotation. See also Samuelson, *Forntid till nutid*, 357; Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 326, 357.
65. Skrutkowska et al., *Människan genom tiderna*, 287.
66. Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 326.
67. Lindberg et al., *Världshistoria 2*, 207–8.
68. Bergström (1989) et al., 64, 89.
69. *Ibid.*, 264.
70. Gutman, “On the character of Nazi Antisemitism,” 350.
71. See for instance Westin, *Människans historia*, 402, 405, 436–7.
72. Sandberg et al., *Epos* (1996) et al. 457–8.
73. *Ibid.*, 459.
74. Nyström & Nyström, *Perspektiv på historien A*, 363, 337–43.
75. *Ibid.*, 311–7.
76. *Ibid.*, 337–43, 363.
77. Alm, *Milstolpar*, 313, 315–6.

78. Ibid., 330.
79. Ericsson & Hansson, *Samband historia 1b*, 148–49, 152.
80. Ibid., 492–5.
81. Syse, “Nazisme utan antisemittisme,” 114–21.
82. Almgren et al. *Alla tiders historia 1b*, 286–8.
83. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 87.
84. IHRA, *Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust*, 16.
85. Ibid., 20.
86. Foster & Burgess, “Problematic Portrayals and Contentious Content,” 26.
87. Ibid., 28, quote 33.
88. Brodin et al., *Historiens huvudlinjer*, 289.
89. Kumlien et al., *Historia för gymnasiet*.
90. For instance in Matsson & Degerman, *Historia 2*, 245.
91. Matsson & Degerman, *Historia 2*, 281.
92. Westin, *Människans historia*, 436.
93. Hildingsson et al., *Två Sekler*, 316–7; Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 345; Brodin et al., *Historiens huvudlinjer*, 297; Samuelson, *Forntid till nutid*, 357.
94. Häger, *Grepp om historien*, 358.
95. Rönnqvist & Markusson Winkvist, *Historiens ansikte [A]*, 397.
96. Öhman, *Sekvens Historia A*, 352–3.
97. Nyström & Nyström, *Perspektiv på historien A*, 337.
98. Ekonen et al., *Människans vägar 2*, 174.
99. Skrutkowska et al., *Människan genom tiderna*, 287.
100. Ekonen et al., *Människans vägar 2*, 175. Bergström et al., *Nya Alla tiders historia*, 277, quotes the German officer Kurt Gerstein, who was active at the Belzec extermination camp, on how the gassing procedure was carried out.
101. Elm & Thulin, *Epok*, 295.
102. Ammert, “Ett innehåll förmedlas,” 260–3.
103. Matsson & Degerman, *Historia 2*, 243–5; Bäcklin et al., 309–10.
104. Nyström & Nyström (2001), *Perspektiv på historien A*, 342–3.
105. Ericsson & Hansson (2009), *Samband historia plus*, 408–431, 424–425.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Funding

This work was supported by 2023 Grant. Linnaeus Knowledge Environment: Education in change.

## Notes on contributor

*Magnus P. S. Persson* is a senior lecturer in modern international history at Linnaeus University, Sweden. He has researched social movements resulting in “strive for the unattainable: The Port Huron Manifesto as authoritative speech” [in Swedish] in *Authority* [in Swedish], Mats Trondman and Malin Lennartsson (eds.) Göteborg: Daidalos, 2018: 259–283. He has further researched history school textbooks, which has resulted, among other things, in “Theoryless history: modern African history in five high school history textbooks” in *Glances: cultural studies perspectives on education* [in Swedish], Niklas Ammert, Ulla Rosén och Jonas Svensson [eds.], Växjö: Linnaeus University Press, 2014: 179–202, and “Explanations in high school history textbooks” [in Swedish], in *HumaNetten*, no. 49, 2022: 65–86, <https://open.lnu.se/index.php/hn/sv/issue/view/257>, <https://doi.org/10.15626/hn.20224905>

## Literature

- Adamson, Daniel. "From Theory to Praxis in Genocide Education: To What Extent are IHRA Guidelines Reflected in the Opinions and Classroom Experiences of Independent-school Educators?" *Holocaust Studies* 29, no. 2 (2023): 1–26. DOI: [10.1080/17504902.2022.2058726](https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2022.2058726).
- Ammert, Niklas. "Ett innehåll förmedlas." In *Att spegla världen. Läromedelsstudier i teori och praktik*, edited by Niklas Ammert, 259–275. Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2011.
- Bruchfeld, Stéphane. In "Öga för öga, tand för tand ...": *en granskning av svenska läromedel i historia, religion och samhällskunskap för högstadiet och gymnasiet om judendom, judisk historia och förintelsen*. Stockholm: Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism, 1996.
- Bruchfeld, Stéphane, and Paul A. Levine. ... om detta må ni berätta ... : *en bok om förintelsen i Europa 1933–1945; Tell ye your Children-: A Book about the holocaust in Europe 1933–1945*. Stockholm: Regeringskansliet, 1998.
- Brustein, William I. *Roots of hate: anti-semitism in Europe before the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Dervin, Fred. "'Thanks to Scandinavia' and Beyond: Nordic Holocaust Education in the 21st Century." In *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*, edited by Zehavit Gross, and E. Doyle Stevick, 427–437. Cham: Springer International, 2015.
- Foster, Stuart, and Adrian Burgess. "Problematic Portrayals and Contentious Content. Representations of the Holocaust in English History Textbooks." *Journal of Educational Media, Memory & Society* 5, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): 20–38.
- Foster, Stuart, and Eleni Karayianni. "Portrayals of the Holocaust in English History Textbooks, 1991–2016: Continuities, Challenges and Concerns." *Holocaust Studies* 23, no. 3 (2017): 314–344.
- Fracapane, Karel. "International Organisations in the Globalisation of Holocaust Education." In *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*, edited by Z. Gross, and E.D. Stevick, 263–276. Cham: Springer, 2015.
- Friedländer, Saul. *Nazi Germany and the Jews. Volume 1: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997.
- Gerner, Kristian, and Klas-Göran Karlsson. *Folkmordens historia: perspektiv på det moderna samhällets skuggsida*. Stockholm: Atlantis, 2011.
- Gray, Michael. *Teaching the Holocaust: Practical Approaches for Ages 11-18*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2015.
- Gross, Magdalena H. "No Longer Estranged: Learning to Teach the Holocaust in Poland." *Holocaust Studies* 24, no. 2 (2018): 131–149.
- Gross, Magdalena H. "No Longer Estranged: Learning to Teach the Holocaust in Poland." *Holocaust Studies* 24, no. 2 (2018): 131–149.
- Gutman, Yisrael. "On the character of Nazi Antisemitism." In *Antisemitism through the ages*, edited by Shmuel Almog, 349–380. Oxford: Pergamon for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1988.
- Hillberg, Raul. *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961. Raul Hillberg, Hur de europeiska judarna förintades. Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1963. Preface by Hugo Valentin.
- IHRA. "Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust." International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. 2019. <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/>.
- IHRA. "IHRA Non-legally Binding Working Definition of Antisemitism." 2016, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/IHRA-non-legally-binding-working-definition-of-antisemitism-1.pdf>.
- Krippendorff, Klaus. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2019.
- Libris. "The Library Information System is the Union Catalog Maintained by the National Library." <https://libris.kb.se/>.

- Lindquist, David. "The Coverage of the Holocaust in High School History Textbooks." *Social Education Volume* 73, no. 6 (2009): 298–304.
- Loefler, Roland. "Så gick det till när 'Förintelsen' kom till Sverige." *Dagens Nyheter*, January 25, 2023, <https://www.dn.se/kultur/sa-gick-det-till-nar-forintelsen-kom-till-sverige/>.
- Löwengart, Mia. *Bilden av antisemitismen och Förintelsen i svenska läromedel i historia. En undersökning av den kunskapssyn och de värderingar som förmedlas genom lärobokstexten*. Uppsala: Programmet för studier kring Förintelsen och folk mord, Uppsala universitet, 2004.
- Mattlar, Jörgen. *Läromedel som didaktisk resurs: med läroboken i fokus*. Stockholm: Natur & kultur, 2025.
- Mithander, C. "From the Holocaust to the Gulag: The Crimes of Nazism and Communism in Swedish post-89 Memory Politics." *European Studies* 30 (2013): 177–207.
- Nicholls, Jason. "Methods in School Textbook Research." *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 3, no. 2 (July 2003): 11–26.
- Pearce, Andy, Stuart Foster, and Alice Pettigrew. "Antisemitism and Holocaust Education." In *Holocaust Education: Contemporary Challenges and Controversies*, edited by Stuart Foster, Andy Pearce, and Alice Pettigrew, 150–170. London: UCL Press, 2020.
- Pettigrew, Alice. "Why Teach or Learn about the Holocaust? Teaching Aims and Student knowlEdge in English Secondary Schools." *Holocaust Studies* 23, no. 3 (2017): 263–288.
- Pingel, Falk. *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*. 2nd ed. Paris/Braunschweig, 2010.
- Rees Jones, Sarah. "The Roots of Antisemitism." In *Teaching the Holocaust: Educational Dimensions, Principles and Practice*, edited by Ian Davies, 11–23. New York: Continuum, 2000.
- SAOB, FÖRINTA. 1927. <https://www.saob.se/artikel/?seek=fc3B6rinta&pz=1> Svenska Akademiens ordbok is a dictionary published by the Swedish Academy.
- Skolöverstyrelsen. *Läroplan för gymnasiet*. [Lgy 65] Stockholm: Skolöverstyrelsen, 1965.
- Skolöverstyrelsen. *Läroplan för gymnasiet*. [Lgy 70 II] Stockholm: Svenska Utbildningsförlaget Liber AB, 1970.
- Skolverket. *Läroplan, examensmål och gymnasiegemensamma ämnen för gymnasieskola 2011*. [Gy 2011] Stockholm: Skolverket, 2011.
- "Stärkt tillgång till läromedel". The Riksdag. 2023-12-19 [https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/betankande/starkt-tillgang-till-laromedel\\_hb01ubu6/](https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/betankande/starkt-tillgang-till-laromedel_hb01ubu6/).
- Syse, Harald. "Nazisme utan antisemittisme. Om fremstillingen av nazismen i norske skolebøker." *Nytt nordisk tidsskrift* 33, no.:1-2 (2016): 111–122.
- UNESCO. "Education about the Holocaust and Preventing Genocide: A Policy Guide." 2017. (ISBN 978-92-3-100221-2) <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248071>.
- UNESCO. *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*. Edited by Karel Fracapane and Matthias Haß. UNESCO, 2014, ISBN 978-92-3-100042-3 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000225973>.
- USHMM. "Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust", the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, USHMM, <https://www.ushmm.org/teach/fundamentals/guidelines-for-teaching-the-holocaust>.
- USHMM. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, "Definition of the Holocaust". 2024. <https://www.ushmm.org/teach/holocaust-lesson-plans/definition-of-the-holocaust>.
- Vashem, Yad. "What was the Holocaust?," <https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/about.html#learnmore> read June 28, 2024.
- Widén, Pär. "Kvalitativ textanalys." In *Handbok i kvalitativ analys*, edited by i Andreas Fejes och Robert Thornberg, 193–210. Stockholm: Liber, 2019.
- Wistrich, Robert S. *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991.