Between Antigypsyism and Human Rights Education: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representations of the Roma Holocaust in European Textbooks

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Abstract

This paper investigates representations of the Roma Holocaust in European textbooks on history, civics, and geography for pupils in upper primary to the end of secondary education. By applying critical discourse analysis (CDA) to a dataset of 472 passages and images referring to the Roma Holocaust from 869 textbooks, this paper reveals educational discourses of in/exclusion by focusing on narratives and linguistic tools, such as speech acts, level of detail and specificity, perspectives in semantic and grammatical forms, vocabulary and syntax. Most knowledge disseminated on the Roma Holocaust concerns numbers and technicalities of murder while Roma-specific details, survivor stories, and individual voices, as well as Romani terminology for the Holocaust (*Porrajmos*) are rare. Generally, the textbooks show little commitment to circulating knowledge about the Roma Holocaust, or specifically focusing on civic or human rights education. Portrayals of the Roma Holocaust are permeated by both explicitly and implicitly racist discourses, coupled with a distinct lack of critical tools with which to deconstruct these narratives. Overall, current textbook representations of the Roma Holocaust mirror social discourse and possibly serve to reproduce Romani exclusion and risk reinforcing antigypsyism attitudes.

Keywords

- Antigypsyism
- Critical discourse analysis
- Education
- Roma
- Roma Holocaust
- Textbooks

Introduction

Historical and current antigypsyism in Europe raises urgent questions on the role and opportunities of education vis-à-vis Roma inclusion and overcoming discrimination. Curricula and textbooks are important tools in building national narratives and normative definitions of society, nation, or citizenry (Schissler and Soysal 2005; Williams 2014; Fuchs and Bock 2018). They are fundamental in the creation of common identities, connecting such entities with particular socio-cultural collective values assumed to be shared among particular groups (Williams 2014; Fuchs and Bock 2018). The representation of ethnic minorities in school textbooks provides a rich source of data for anti-discrimination research because, as authoritative cultural objects, textbooks discursively represent and construct visions of society and its constituent parts. In this sense, textbooks both influence and mirror dominant social discourses about culturally, racially, or ethnically defined (minority) groups (Cruz 1994; Weninger and Williams 2005; Janmaat 2007; Padgett 2015; Abdou 2018). Even though content of textbooks alone cannot reveal what is actually taught in schools, it can give invaluable insights into the issues and discursive frames which students will most likely face during their formal education.

This article begins with two key observations in current textbook research: First, studies on representations of the Holocaust and other atrocities of the Second World War have revealed that textbooks covering these topics rarely mention Roma (Carrier and Kohler 2020; Luku 2020). A study on the representation of Roma in European textbooks, however, has shown that the Roma Holocaust is, alongside demographic aspects, the most prominent theme in textbooks that make *any* reference to Roma at all (Council of Europe 2020). These findings call for more in-depth analysis of how the Roma Holocaust, in particular, is represented in European textbooks, and reflections on the role and purpose of education in the context of antigypsyism and widespread discrimination of Roma.

Two major aims of Holocaust education have been identified by cross-national textbook studies: One emphasizes historical knowledge, the other civic and human rights education (Bromley and Russell 2010; Carrier, Fuchs, and Messinger 2015). The latter is influenced by postwar responses resulting in heightened national, European, and international understandings of humanity and morality, as well as the need to protect these values within our societies and embrace a collective value of justice (Alexander 2013). When Holocaust education emerged, and even as it developed further, Romani experiences were initially ignored in the process of historical documentation, memory restoration, recognition, retribution, and reparations (Mirga-Kruszelnicka, Acuña, and Trojański 2015). It was not until the 1990s that the persecution and genocide of Roma and Sinti became a topic of scholarly attention (About and Abakunova 2016), and educational projects focusing on the subject only began to appear in the 2000s (Polak 2013). A specific research focus on the Roma Holocaust in the formal contents of teaching is even rarer.[1]

1 A notable exception is Stachwitz (2006) who investigated the representation of the genocide of Roma and Sinti in German history textbooks at the turn of the twenty-first century and found that it is often absent and, when it is present, is imprecise and inaccurate.

This study investigates representations of the Roma Holocaust in textbooks designed for corresponding ISCED levels 2 and 3[2] in history, civic education, and geography. It draws on a dataset developed in a joint research project between the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media | Georg Eckert Institute, the Roma Education Fund, and the Council of Europe, entitled "Representation of Roma in European Textbooks and Curricula" (Council of Europe 2020). The project covered a systematically selected sample of 869 textbooks from 20 European countries in use and/or approved for the school year 2018–2019, 289 of which included references to Roma, Sinti, or other national equivalent terminology.[3] Applying critical discourse analysis (CDA) to this dataset of references, this paper investigates the portrayal of the Roma Holocaust in textbooks by focusing critically on narratives and linguistic tools which either (re)produce inequality or promote Romani inclusion within European societies.

Dominant societal discourses, which in several European countries deliberately promote antigypsyism, provide the context for the production, use, and reception of textbook content. This makes human rights education in teaching the Roma Holocaust especially challenging and complex (van Baar 2014). For example, classroom observations in Romania, where Holocaust education has been mandatory for over a decade, documented practitioners having trouble addressing the topic, even if increasingly mentioned in textbooks. Many history and civics teachers display cognitive barriers concerning the Roma Holocaust; Kelso deems this due to ignorance of the topic, or deep-seated prejudice against Roma (Kelso 2013, 70). Even when trying to counteract the stereotyping of Roma in class more generally, some teachers end up inadvertently reinforcing anti-Romani attitudes expressed by students (Szakács 2018, 161–62).

Without minimizing the role of teachers, this article focuses on identifying how such dominant societal discourses are expressed and reproduced in textbooks, which we see as key media for addressing discrimination in educational discourses. Given their wide reach and authority in national education systems, textbooks hold transformative potential in challenging dominant societal discourses and provide us with important sources for researching the current state of Roma Holocaust education in Europe.

1. Methodological Approach

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) tools employed in this article are those outlined by Teun A. van Dijk (1993; 2015). As he contends, the CDA framework is useful for analysing "the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk 2015, 466). We adapted van Dijk's tools for our study, specifically examining speech acts dominating the text; local meanings and coherence detailed; specificity of content related to the Roma

2 ISCED: International Standard Classification of Education. Depending on each country's education system ISCED 2 and 3 range from upper primary to the end of secondary education.

3 In addition to the report on Romani representations by the Council of Europe, the international working group also made available online a "List of References to Roma in European Textbooks," including all original and translated quotes from the textbooks quoted in this paper and a complete list of all textbooks consulted: https://repository.gei.de/handle/11428/306. All translations of non-English textbook passages in this paper were generated by the working group.

Holocaust and experiences; perspectives taken revealed by grammatical forms (e.g. pronouns, adverbs, verbs, active/passive voice); and the use of vocabulary and syntax that specifically relate to narrations of the Roma Holocaust. To contextualize this analysis, we also considered authorship (i.e., participation in textbook production), readership (i.e., who is addressed) and schemata (i.e., implicit knowledge and underlying assumptions). We interpreted the findings by linking these aspects with broader discourses fostering Roma exclusion and discrimination.

Empirically, this analysis draws on a data subset of a larger study of representations of Roma in European textbooks, analysing in detail those passages that specifically refer to the Roma Holocaust (472 references). We counted as 'reference to the Roma Holocaust' any mention of genocide or violence against Roma; any description of events, ideologies, or policies which led to the persecution and genocide of Roma during and prior to the Second World War (453); as well as content referring to remembrance or reparations for persecution and crimes against Roma (19). After identifying and classifying these references thematically, we applied a CDA framework and developed further codes inductively. All three authors reviewed and coded all references to the Roma Holocaust to ensure intercoder reliability. Five main steps were followed:

1. Identification of the concepts and themes relevant to the Roma Holocaust.
2. Development of specific codes based on the CDA framework and examination of the data.
3. Coding the data, also developing new codes based on concepts and themes identified through close readings of the dataset.
4. Sorting the data based on the refined codes, themes, and concepts.
5. Synthesizing the concepts and themes.

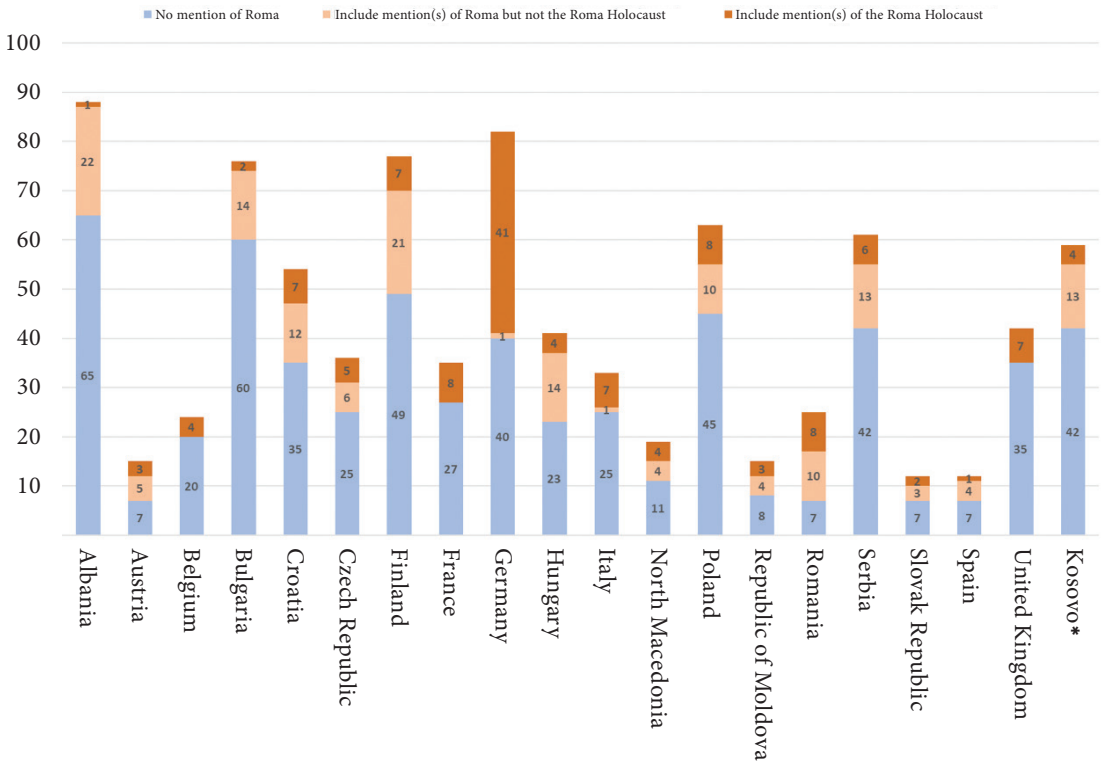
2. Description of the Dataset

Of 869 history, civics, and geography textbooks from the larger data corpus, 289 mention Roma at all and, of these, 132 refer to what we categorized as the Roma Holocaust. With 472 passages or images, content referring to the Roma Holocaust represents approximately half (49 percent) of all references to Roma in the larger data corpus (Council of Europe 2020). While atrocities against Roma during the Second World War do therefore appear as a significant issue when Roma are mentioned, the proportion of such references varies greatly according to country, ranging from two to 100 percent (Figure 1). For example, of 41 references to Roma appearing in 23 (of 88) Albanian textbooks only *one* sentence mentions the physical elimination of Roma by Nazi Germany. In contrast, four of 24 Belgian textbooks mention Roma and *all* four of these are history textbooks that refer to the Roma Holocaust. Similarly, in eight out of the 35 French textbooks, there are 71 passages and images referring to Roma, and all, except one, refer to the atrocities during the Second World War. Half of German textbooks (41 out of 82) reference atrocities against Roma perpetrated during the Second World War.[4] On the one hand, the space and attention

4 The size of the textbook samples varies to a large degree from one country to another, due to the heterogeneity of textbook markets and state regulations. Germany has an especially large textbook market with 16 federal states following different curricular requirements, leading to different versions of the same book being taught simultaneously throughout the country. As more than one version has been included in the dataset, similar references recur in the German sample.

dedicated to the Roma Holocaust appears larger in these latter works compared to many other countries; on the other hand, Roma are almost never mentioned in *other* contexts than those of past atrocities, and hardly any insights into the past or current everyday lives of Romani populations or their contributions to society are given (Council of Europe 2020).

Figure 1. Textbooks Mentioning Roma by Country



3. Findings of the CDA analysis

Speech Acts and the Intended Reader

Textbooks are an authoritative multimodal genre characterized by assertions through declarative sentences and images (van Leeuwen 1992). The most frequent speech act found within the dataset, *the assertion,* points to the authorial intention to share knowledge about the Roma Holocaust in order to lead the reader(s) to particular historical narratives presented as truths and facts. In turn, assertions position the textbooks and their authors as authorities on Roma Holocaust history and experiences.

The type, form, and extent of information given within a text also indicate its intended reader(s). The absence of the terms for the Roma Holocaust used by Roma, such as *Porrajmos* or *Samudaripen*, as well as the scarcity of Romani-specific aspects of remembrance, suggest that Roma are not among the intended

readers of these textbooks. In total, five references, from Croatia (1), Germany (1), Hungary (2), and Italy (1), include a Romani term for the Holocaust. A passage from a Hungarian textbook is a remarkable exception: "We call the Roma genocide *Porrajmos*" (Száray 2016, 269). Not only does the author of this book include the Romani term (meaning 'the devouring' or 'the destruction') that many Roma use when remembering the genocide of their people, he also aptly constructs a common 'we' that combines, in a dual voice, 'we, the Romani people' with 'we, the dominant society'. This is, however, the only case of Roma-inclusive dual voice in the 472 references to the Roma Holocaust.

Similarly, definitions of Sinti and Roma – offered in Austrian, French, and German textbook content on the Holocaust – suggest that the imagined audience for these texts barely includes Romani students, or that students need an explanation as to who Roma are. These definitions vary in detail and are typically found in textboxes or in the margins. What they have in common is that they describe Roma as "living in" Europe or in a European country. None of the 14 definitions assert that Roma belong to the wider society outside the group's location, by using words like "part of", for instance, or legally inclusive terms such as "citizens of" or "residents of".

Pejorative denominations for Roma, such as *Zigeuner* in Belgium and Germany, *cigan* in Bulgaria, *tzigane* in France, *zingaro* in Italy, *cygan* in Poland, or *ţigan* in Romanian, convey negative connotations via etymological and morphological associations in the national languages and phraseology, by associating Roma with stereotypes of untrustworthiness, poverty, uncleanliness, and criminality, to name a few. Such terms appear in the textbooks in quotes from historical sources, for example, or in authorial text, and are sometimes included as a 'synonym' in brackets (before or after the term 'Roma'), without explanation as to the discriminatory context of their use and pejorative connotations. As official texts endorsed by governments or educational institutions, textbooks using pejorative terms without further explanation suggest tacit compliance with the stereotypical terminology and a lack of acknowledgement of how this might be hurtful to Roma communities. More worryingly, it may also contribute to the further exclusion of Romani students' experience in the classroom and the further solidification of these terms in everyday language among the majority population.

Level of Importance: Sinti and Roma "were also excluded, persecuted and murdered"[5]

The level of importance accorded to a topic can be evaluated by considering the amount of detail and level of specificity it is afforded within a text. How much information is given, or alternatively how vaguely or indirectly prejudice, discrimination, persecution, or other mistreatment of a racial or ethnic group are described, indicates the priority given to these aspects within the text as a whole, as well as its positioning vis-à-vis discrimination through discursive constructions of 'us' vs. 'them' (Van Dijk 1993, 249–83; Van Dijk 1999, 147–48). We thus gauged the discursive importance assigned to the Roma Holocaust by also analysing levels of specificity and detail in the textbook references to the Roma Holocaust.

5 Dickmann. (2014, 148–49)

It is most striking that Roma are linked to the main content by being listed as victims in relation to another group's experiences, in sentences like this from a Slovak textbook: "A similar fate was met by the Roma" (Kovac et al. 2016, 68). One of many examples is from a German history textbook, "[…] *Apart from* Jews, other peoples were *also* victims of extermination, *including* the two ethnic communities of the Sinti and Roma" (Geus 2011, 184 emphases added). Resonating with Kelso's findings (2013), 40 percent of references that mention multiple victims include Roma with transitional or conjunctive adverbs, such as; "also", "not only", "as well as", "in addition to", and often, either as secondary to another group, or the last entry in a list of victims. These references are, on average, one to two sentences long and no further specificities on the persecution of Roma are given. Both the use of conjunctive adverbs and the low level of detail and specificity indicate that the content is not particularly interested in conveying knowledge about the Roma Holocaust.

One third (155) of the 472 references to the Roma Holocaust exclusively refer to Roma and no other persecuted group. However, it is important to note that without the German textbooks, only 45 out of 238 (18.9 percent) of the passages and images in textbooks from the remaining 19 European countries give exclusive accounts of Roma. Not a single textbook from Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia, or Spain dedicates a single paragraph or sentence *exclusively* to the Roma Holocaust. Additionally, the level of detail varies greatly, the most common details being of a 'technical' rather than moral or personal nature: i.e., how many (the number of victims), where (names of camps), when (specific dates) and how they were murdered. This account in a textbook from England places emphasis on the number of Jews and Jehovah's Witnesses and subsumes Roma under "the rest":

> There were about 8000 men in the camp, but it was rumoured that the number was shortly to be increased to 20,000. There were 1500 Jews, and 800 Bible students. The rest were politicals, so-called criminals and gypsies. Deaths took place daily in the camp (Wilkes 2016, 69).

Detail, specificity, and an individual perspective could be expressed by using direct quotes from Romani individuals. However, accounts of Romani survivors are scarce within textbooks, with only 12 direct quotations from Romani individuals found in German (10), French (1), and Austrian (1), and one indirect account included in a Hungarian (1) textbook.[6]

Lastly, we considered whether the mass murder of Roma during the Second World War is labelled explicitly as genocide or Holocaust, because doing so can signal to readers the distinct suffering and experiences Roma communities faced. The word "Holocaust" is mainly mentioned in lesson or unit titles where the body text includes references to Roma but not always in sentences or paragraphs about Roma. The specific designation "Roma Holocaust" is mentioned three times in Hungarian (2) and Moldovan (1) textbooks. *Porrajmos* is introduced as a Romani term for the genocide of Roma in five textbooks. With nine instances the designation "Roma genocide" is found more often in the dataset. These terms locate descriptions of the atrocities in different discourses. While all the terms denote a moral discourse, the

6 In this textbook, a non-Romani researcher vividly describes the story of a Romani community deported to Dachau, based on implied firsthand accounts.

term "genocide" also includes a legal discourse, and *Porrajmos* assigns agency in naming the trauma to the community that experienced it. Terminology specifically including the word "Roma" indicates the relevance and importance placed specifically on the Roma Holocaust experiences.

The grammatical forms used indicate that the content is not dedicated to particular knowledge of the Roma Holocaust. Instead, Roma are referred to as victims, almost exclusively, in relation to another group's experiences. As a result, the Holocaust may appear to readers as having (mainly) happened to another group, or that what happened to other victims is of more importance.

Perpetrators' Viewpoint

Romani experiences during the Second World War are presented overwhelmingly from the perspective of the perpetrators, a finding that echoes broader research on the Holocaust in textbooks. Studies have shown how the perpetrator's narrative is privileged, while Jewish life, history, and culture before and after the Holocaust, Jewish resistance or viewpoints, are often missing from dominant accounts of the Holocaust (Boersema and Schimmel 2008; Carrier and Kohler 2020; Luku 2020). We found similar patterns in narratives of the Roma Holocaust in the dataset.

A vocabulary that originates with the perpetrators dominates the presentation of justifications of Romani persecution: e.g., "Institute for Racial Hygiene"; '"elements of a different race"; "historically grown blood community"; "enemies of the people"; "the Gypsy issue," while sometimes being used in inverted commas to show authorial distancing from this terminology. These instances rarely provide an explanation qualifying the vocabulary; inverted commas are placed as if their use was self-explanatory. Furthermore, the perpetrators' categorization and labelling of victim groups (e.g., "the Roma," "the Gypsies"') remain unquestioned in most textbooks.

Apart from direct quotations from Sinti or Roma survivors, 13 references include quotations from original sources. Five of these are from decrees and other government documents, five quote survivors who are not Sinti or Roma, and three cite contemporary political figures. Their content describes the actions of the perpetrators, pushing aside victims' experiences, emotions, or actions.

Textbooks in many countries give the full names of (mostly German) perpetrators, i.e., Adolf Hitler, Adolf Eichmann, Heinrich Himmler, Dr. Mengele, Dr. Rotman, Wilhelm Frick, and sometimes mention their official position. In Romania, Ion Antonescu and in Croatia the Ustashe regime are introduced as perpetrators. By comparison, the names of Romani victims and survivors (Johann Trollmann, Asta Fadler, Karl Stojka, B. Steinbach, Ch. Winterstein, Herman W, *all in German, French, and Austrian textbooks*) are given much more infrequently than those of perpetrators.

Victimhood, Passivity, and Lack of Agency

A total of 42.8 percent of the textbook passages coded use passive verbs in describing the Romani experience during the Second World War, with variations across countries. Austria (92 percent), Belgium (73 percent),

Croatia (68 percent), Czech Republic (80 percent), Finland (78 percent), Kosovo (100 percent), and Poland (60 percent) stand out with relatively high proportions of passive verbs. In the textbooks of many countries, therefore, Roma are consistently the subject of passive verbal constructions stating that they "were deported", "were killed", "were slaughtered", or "were murdered." The use of the passive voice reinforces the victimhood status assigned to Roma by perpetrators in the past and perpetuates it today by stressing that something *was done to* Romani individuals (passive or indirect object), rather than that *Roma did* something (active subject). The perpetrators emerge as 'the doers' (active agents), while Roma appear as passive receivers of action (sometimes leaving open who exactly *does* the action). For instance, the authors of a French textbook state: "From 1940, the Gypsies had been concentrated in camps before they were deported to Poland to be murdered" (Auger and Bonnet 2012, 101).

Even some exceptions to this grammatical pattern reinforce the same logic, portraying Roma as stripped of agency and passive receivers of action, for example, when an active construction in a photo caption in a French textbook describes Roma as "Gypsies waiting for death in Belzec (1942)" (Dalbert and Prado-Madaule 2012, 99) or a German book mentions them as "suffer[ing] a fate" (Berger-von der Heide 2009, 87). In these (albeit rare) examples where the *doer* of an action is Roma, the use of active verbs does not lend semantic agency, as is the case when perpetrators' actions are presented via verbs in the active voice. Instead, Roma appear stripped of agency due to the *lexical* nature of the verbs, whose meaning presents them as helpless, not playing an active role in their own lives, but rather as 'objects' in the hands of others, or even of an implacable 'destiny' or 'fate'.

Very few acts of resistance by Romani individuals are mentioned, comprising 29 references. In these, abstract and passive verb forms prevail. This reinforces the passive role of Roma, despite the agentic content of the events as described in this Polish textbook (i.e., Romani persons rebelled):

> In 1943, a sector called the Gypsy Family Camp was established in the Auschwitz camp, in which whole Roma families were placed. During the first attempt to liquidate them in May 1944, a prisoners' rebellion broke out. Around 6,000 Roma were murdered. After the rebellion was suppressed, the camp was finally liquidated in early August of the same year (Kozłowska, Unger, and Zają c 2012, 143–44).

A notable exception is the resistance story of Sinto boxer Johann Trollmann, who is mentioned in several German textbooks. His story is in some cases recounted in active verbal forms (e.g., he "dominated," "launched punches," "dyed his hair," among others).

> To the audience's consternation, the Sinto, although slight in comparison, dominated his opponent from the first round. He bobbed and weaved around him, landed punches at will and scored point after point. However, the referees declared the fight a draw. The audience protested loudly against the outrageous result, forcing the organizers to give in and declare Johann Trollmann the winner after all. Eight days later, however, the German Boxing Association stripped the young Sinto of all his titles as well as his membership of the association. According to the explanatory statement, Trollmann fought in a manner 'foreign to the [German] race', his boxing style being 'gimmicky' and 'not German'. He was granted the

> right to one last fight. Johann Trollmann dyed his hair blond and stood in the ring without defending himself. He could not have shown his protest more clearly (Lendzian 2013, 153).

The very inclusion of such events – which we refer to as "stories of resistance" – is noteworthy because they offer complexity to the otherwise usually one-sided portrayal of Roma before, during, and after the Holocaust. Moreover, the use of active verbs in these accounts indicates that it is possible to employ grammatical constructions in ways that empower and lend agency to victims of persecution rather than reinforcing an exclusive victimhood status.

Who is Responsible?

Atrocities, according to many textbook representations, somehow *happened*, and the use of the passive voice allows avoiding explicitly naming specific perpetrators. Instead, readers may infer the identities of perpetrators from previous statements within the chapter. Alternatively, other references de-personalize perpetrators by referring to them in a more abstract fashion as ideologies or policies ("National Socialist ideology" or "Nazi racial policies"), regimes, camps, or even locations of crimes and atrocities. Over half (55 percent) of the references fail to directly identify the perpetrator(s) of acts of persecution against Roma.

When an active verb is used with the perpetrator as the subject, in almost all the references this subject is a group ("the Germans", "the Nazis", "camp guards", "SS-task forces" or an abstract term ("racist policies") like in this Polish history textbook:

> In the areas occupied by the Germans, the Jews and Gypsies suffered the worst fate. The Nazis proclaimed that they were a threat to the German people. Referring to racist ideology and centuries of prejudices, they planned mass genocides. (Przybyliński and Moryksiewicz 2012, 102)

Assigning the perpetrator role to a non-descript, abstract, or generic entity, or simply referring to 'the Germans' or 'the Nazis' locates responsibility at a greater geographic and temporal distance, leading to possible self-distancing from the crimes, as something that "we" need not feel guilty about, but rather "others" (i.e., the Germans, the Nazis). The absence of grammatical tools to directly, or implicitly, connect the perpetrator described with past or current societies or readers, misses an opportunity to generate a sense of collective responsibility.

In countries where local authorities were associated with the Nazis or pursued fascist policies themselves (e.g., the Ustashe regime in Croatia, Antonescu regime in Romania), temporal and spatial distance is more difficult because positive national identity-building relies on geographic and temporal continuities.

> The emergence of the Roma 'problem' is a consequence of the evolution of Romanian nationalism, on the one hand, and of the change of political regime in Romania under the government of General Ion Antonescu, on the other. According to Marshall Ion Antonescu's testimony at his trial in 1946, the policy of 'Romanization', which in summer and early autumn

> 1942 led to the deportation of Roma to Transnistria, was his own decision […] (Adăscăliţei and Lazăr 2007, 67).

The textbooks therefore emphasize how specific crimes – e.g., murder, deportation – were the deeds of particular regimes and imply that the population at large did not necessarily take part in the atrocities, or, if they did so, reluctantly or attempted to resist:

> Eventually, great dissatisfaction, and then resistance, was caused by the terror that the Ustashe authorities had begun against Serbs, Jews, Roma, and Croat political insurgents. Ustashe authorities accepted fascist and Nazi ideologies, based on racism and anti-Semitism, and they adopted a model that emphasized the cult of the nation and the leader from their Italian and German mentors. [...] Soon the German model was completely embraced and concentration camps were opened where, along with Jews, Serbs and Roma were killed in their masses (Erdelja and Stojaković 2015, 180).

This kind of narrative might not only enable students to disconnect the national self from the crimes – e.g., it was not 'us' (e.g., Croatians, Romanians) – but can also serve to distance readers from the victims: the common 'we', implied here, is the non-Romani population. This dual distancing, while acknowledging that past atrocities had been carried out where 'we' live, may serve to diminish the connection of this collective 'we' to past atrocities ,and reduce chances for a dissonant self-identity (see Bărbulescu 2015), as well as any individual or social moral responsibility to ensure equity for Roma today.

An exemplary passage from a Romanian textbook shows how responsibility is placed on Romani victims via narratives legitimating policies of assimilation or perpetration before, during, and after the Second World War:

> The Roma minority (Gypsies) were in a difficult situation. Because they had limited material means, lacked education and their way of life was often different from that of the rest of the population, they were subjected to several coercive measures by the Romanian government. During World War Two, they were deported to Transnistria, where many Roma died in concentration camps. After the war, the communist regime imposed a settlement scheme on the Roma minority that was primarily designed to assimilate the Gypsies. In some respects, this [scheme] had positive consequences: Compulsory education and professional training. Encouraged by the government's demographic policies, the number of Gypsies rose spectacularly. The assimilation of Gypsies was not a success, even though, according to official documents from 1980, Gypsies no longer existed in Romania. Even after 1989, their situation had barely changed, although the Roma minority enjoys full rights and attempts are made to integrate them into Romanian society (Băluţoiu 2013, 97–98).

This passage perpetuates negative stereotypes of Romani narratives, justifies forced assimilation, blames victims for their persecution, and presents the perpetrators of atrocities in a somewhat positive light. Furthermore, "Gypsy", a pejorative term, is explicitly introduced as a synonym for "the Roma minority" but used non-critically throughout the paragraph.

Refutation/Condemning

Grammatical structures or contents that unequivocally refute or condemn the actions of the perpetrators are scarce. A prevailing refutation device found in the textbooks is the use of quotations, without critical discussion, around words or statements which the perpetrators themselves used to justify persecution and violence, claims that Roma "had to be" "cleansed", were "inferior races", "antisocial elements", or "work-shy", for instance. It is striking how the textbooks often present such wording while failing to inform readers that these aspects *were not the cause* of atrocities against Roma, but racist *justifications* perpetrators used to legitimize their crimes.

Discussions of the pervasiveness of racism, its origins, and legitimization via different societal mechanisms, as well as its usage in justifying crime, are conspicuously missing in such descriptions of the purported 'causality' of the Roma Holocaust. An Italian textbook states:

> The Nazi persecutions, for example, affected Jews and Gypsies, two populations who had already faced a diaspora, even if for very different reasons: The Gypsies for their traditional nomadic lifestyle, the Jews for the conquest of their homeland, Palestine, by the Romans in the 1st century AD (Frugoni et al. 2013, 291).

A further observation is an absence of clear and decisive information on why it is immoral to classify Roma via stereotypes, prejudice, or negative characteristics. The underlying assumption here is that the reader already understands and grasps concepts of racialization, oppression, and prejudice, rendering more in-depth discussion – beyond flagging problematic words with quotation marks – superfluous. Condemnation of the ideology is taken for granted and not explicitly stated, as in this example from Germany:

> According to National Socialist ideology, the 'community of ethnic Germans' only included the 'historically grown blood community'. Any groups not regarded as part of this community, including Jews, Roma and Sinti ('*Zigeuner*'), homosexuals and 'antisocial elements' were vilified as 'enemies of the people'. The National Socialists declared a 'battle' against all of them (Bernsen and Brückner 2016, 119).

Furthermore, the text appears to assume that the readers themselves are free of prejudice. In the absence of prior knowledge or appropriate teaching guidance, there is a risk that uncritical narrative constructions about Roma may be fostered among readers exposed to unrefuted repetitions of racist, or demeaning narratives and categorizations promoted by perpetrators.

Another (less frequent) approach to explaining the reasons for the persecution, particularly in textbooks from Eastern European countries, references laws or policies, such as racial hierarchy laws, sedentary laws, or others that Roma were deemed to violate. Such laws are often left – at least explicitly – unquestioned in terms of their immoral or racializing character, or their authoritarian enforcement onto entire populations. This makes it difficult for readers to grasp and therefore condemn criminal acts perpetrated in observance of such laws. The unguided reader may be tempted to follow (or remember) the argument

that Roma violated a law. Consequently, the persecution of Roma could be read as a government reaction to law breaking and reproduce the stereotypical discourse of "Gypsy criminality" that prevails in media coverage of Roma across Europe (Tremlett, Messing, and Kóczé 2017). Such lines of argument effectively portray Roma as *other*, external to an assumed 'legitimate' social identity, which can further reproduce and exacerbate the exclusion Roma face in Europe at present.

> A government decree ordered the Roma to become settled and give up their nomadic way of life. Anyone who failed to respect the order could be imprisoned in labour camps for Roma people. Two labour camps were set up as of August 1940 in Lety u Písku and in Hodonín u Kunštátu. At first, Roma who refused to become settled were interned; later, any Roma were detained. From spring 1943 Roma and Jews were deported primarily to Auschwitz, the so called 'death factory'. During the protectorate, more than 4,000 men, women and children of Roma origin were slaughtered (Capka 2016, 63).

The above excerpt from a Czech textbook mentions a government decree which specifically targeted the Romani way of life. It provides a legally oriented narrative which presents Roma as disobeying a law but fails to offer any discussion of this law's discriminatory character or any explanation of what the "nomadic way of life" meant for Romani communities. This passage can be read as describing a legitimate action on the part of authorities, whose role is to enforce laws, not to question their moral consequences. Subsequent reports of deportation to camps and murders of Romani women, children, and men may therefore result in a paradoxical reading of the situation which may justify, rather than condemn, crimes against Roma.

Human Rights Narratives and Empathetic Connections

Contrary to general Holocaust education concepts, direct or explicit human rights education in relation to the Roma Holocaust is conspicuously rare in the textbooks analysed, with the exception of German textbooks and two references in one English textbook. More common is an *implied* human rights education, indicated by vocabulary such as "crimes against humanity" or "dehumanized". Both direct and implicit references, within a rights-based narrative, make up 15.7 percent, or 75 of the total 472 references to the Roma Holocaust. However, the majority of references (65 of 75) presenting readers with a rights narrative, appear in German textbooks. Apart from these, only 3.8 percent of passages on the Roma Holocaust reflect a (human) rights narrative.

A two-page section in an English textbook showcases how Roma Holocaust education can provide opportunities to engage with historic and contemporary prejudice, discrimination, and persecution, and their interconnections. The title of the section is "How can prejudice and discrimination lead to persecution? People who have suffered systematic persecution. Case Study: The Roma gypsy people" (Davison and Woodyatt 2009, 114). The section offers historical details on prejudice and discrimination against Roma. It also provides the reader with information on how the history of prejudice led to Nazi persecution and how Roma continue to face prejudice, discrimination, and persecution in society.

Describing human or individual characteristics and emotions, instead of abstract topics, can lead to empathetic connections with Roma Holocaust experiences and provide opportunities for lessons on social justice and human rights to the reader. References that promote such empathetic connections are, however, extremely rare. The dataset identified 47 (9.9 percent) references that evoke an emotional response, 32 of those in German textbooks.

An empathetic and human connection to Roma Holocaust victims can be achieved lexically by inspiring an emotional response, establishing a connection and a deeper understanding of victims' trauma. Additional methods include eyewitness accounts, the telling of personal stories, and the inclusion of material from Romani sources. In a Hungarian textbook, powerful storytelling from a witness account is used to describe experiences Hungarian Roma faced in a German concentration camp. The passage illustrates how, in contrast to the dominant structure of presenting details through assertions (i.e., the dominant mode of authorial texts), a storytelling structure that evokes sensory experiences (e.g., colours, smells, temperature, textures) effectively pulls the reader into the scene. The passage also stands out because of the level of detail it provides, as well as by the variation of passive and active verbal constructions with Romani subjects.[7]

> The end of the Gypsy community of Ondod was Dachau. Here their humanity ceased to exist. They became faceless. Their personality shrunk to an identification number in the eyes of the SS. It was on the left side of the front of their linen jacket. The Gypsies were marked with a red triangle. For hours at dawn, the SS took roll calls. The hundreds of thousands of identification numbers were read in German, and the owner of the number had to reply. This also entailed many punishments, as Hungarian gypsies who did not speak German found it difficult to remember the German meaning of the number. So, for long hours, there was the queuing, in the snow, frost in the yard. They were living in unheated wooden houses, lying on boards, wearing blankets or overcoats. Their food was also subject to the famous German precision. The diet was repetitive, and in terms of quantity and quality did not fit the concept of human food. Initially, the daily portion was one piece of brick bread for twelve people, and later the same portion was given to twenty. The only vegetables were boiled beets. […] (after Dr. Elemér Varnagy) (Personal account of Gypsies from the village of Ondód being sent to the concentration camp at Dachau) (Balla 2012, 162).

An Austrian geography book includes a poem by Karl Stojka, a Romani artist:

> We Roma and Sinti are the flowers of this earth. You can crush us, you can tear us out of the earth, you can gas us, you can burn us, you can beat us to death – but like the flowers we return again and again ... Prof. Karl Stojka (Dittrich, Dorfinger, Fridrich, Fuhrmann, Kögler et al. 2017, 39).

7 Even though the passage contains a factual error – that the colour of the triangle used to mark Roma in the camps was red – the vividness of the witness account could, if used critically by the teacher in class, engender richer engagement with the topic than mere numbers or technicalities would.

Artistic expression and commemoration, while rare in the dataset, can facilitate an emotional and personal connection to past persecution. Interrelating the humanity of the reader and the Romani individual who experienced the Holocaust gives a human perspective to previous details given in the chapter, linking past persecution and human rights in a more concrete way.

Finally, tasks and questions, meant to summarize acquired knowledge in textbooks, are strong indicators of what students are expected to learn or remember about a topic. Textbook exercises that reflect specifically on Roma experiences and build empathetic human connections are very rare. Instead, students are frequently asked to recite the technicalities of how, where and when Roma were murdered or persecuted, such as in a French textbook: "How was the extermination of Jews and Gypsies carried out in Auschwitz-Birkenau?" (Auger and Bonnet 2012, 94) or – in relation to certain maps and sources – "Where did the genocide of the Jews and Gypsies take place?", "Which different methods were used to exterminate the Jews and the Gypsies?", "How many Jews and Gypsies were killed in the genocide?" (Fellahi and Hazard-Tourillon 2014, 81).

Such examples represent, in our view, missed opportunities to encourage historical or personal reflection on the persecution and experiences of Romani groups during the Holocaust, and fail to encourage students to engage empathetically with the topic. Some exercises, however, do invite the reader to actively inquire about past atrocities in their local context, to consider everyday aspects of persecution, and reflect critically on how discrimination still affects Romani communities today:

> […] Were any 'gypsy camps' set up in the town where you live or go to school during the period from 1936 onwards? Find out more about when they were built, how big they were and what everyday life was like in the camps (e.g., by looking at camp regulations). Keep a record of this information in your portfolio (Brückner and Focke 2015, 194).
>
> Tasks: 2. Give an account of the persecution of Sinti and Roma.
>
> 3. Analyse to what extent Sinti and Roma are still discriminated against today (Berger-von der Heide 2015, 117).

Discussion and Conclusion

Historical and Human Rights Education

The primary purpose of Holocaust education considered in this paper was the transmission of historical knowledge on a particular aspect – in this case, the Roma Holocaust. Our findings suggest that this purpose is only sporadically met by the textbooks analysed. As we have shown above, the analysed textbook content is characterized by a pronounced dearth of specific historical knowledge related to the persecution and genocide of Roma. Importantly, particular collective and individual experiences of Roma are largely absent and disconnected from the broader historical knowledge presented in textbooks. This disconnection is achieved via various linguistic mechanisms, for example,

by mentioning Roma only as one entry in a longer list of victims, or by using transitional or conjunctive adverbs (e.g., "as well as", "too"). Most knowledge that readers gain about the Roma Holocaust hinges on technicalities of murder: where, when, or how Roma were killed alongside other victim groups. Romani-specific details, experiences, survivor stories, and individual voices, as well as Romani sources and terminology for the Roma Holocaust (*Porrajmos*) are a marked rarity, only found in textbooks from a few countries. The omission of historical content, specifically on the Roma Holocaust, limits the chances for readers to gain historical information from the Romani perspective, despite such information being increasingly available.[8]

The secondary purpose of Holocaust education, to teach universal human rights and the value of social justice, is arguably achieved even less by the textbook passages analysed. Human rights narratives related to the Roma Holocaust are nearly non-existent outside German textbooks where, although they are present to some degree, are minimal. The dominant perspective of the perpetrator (grammatically via active verbs or semantically via the unmarked and unreflective reproduction of perpetrator terminology or causal narratives), the consistent victimhood status assigned to Roma (e.g., through passive constructions), and the limited number of sources quoting individual Romani voices fail to enable readers to form emotional connections with Romani experiences of persecution. In the same vein, very few Romani individuals are introduced by name, leading to a portrayal of the Roma Holocaust as an impersonal experience and of Roma as a collective, homogenous group, united by suffering and an adverse fate. The scarcity of stories of Romani resistance and post-war redress can be understood as a missed opportunity to educate readers on rights violations, past traumas, and intergenerational impacts from a human rights perspective. Generally, the textbooks analysed fail to make connections between past, present, and future. Overall, the neglect of personalization and depth in their portrayal of Romani persecution during the Second World War is a dereliction of Holocaust education which might otherwise serve to build a sense of moral and social collective responsibility and solidarity with the Romani community.

Textbooks, European Antigypsyism, and Roma Holocaust Education

As mass media with authoritative character, textbooks can either reinforce existing prejudice and discrimination or promote anti-racist discourse.

The analysis presented here showed that European textbooks, by and large, resonate with widespread antigypsyist attitudes, while rare examples of human rights and inclusive Roma Holocaust education do exist and should be encouraged. The narratives they promote can be said, therefore, to be situated between antigypsyism and human rights education.

Our analysis revealed, first, that both explicit and implicit racist discourses permeate the portrayal of the Roma Holocaust in European textbooks. Coupled with a lack of critical tools to deconstruct racist discourses, this coexistence may serve to reproduce wider social Romani exclusion and antigypsyism.

8 A positive example and initiative is the RomArchive: https://www.romarchive.eu/en

Discourses of marginalization are also reflected in textbooks. For instance, the subordinate importance accorded to Roma Holocaust experiences – either through non-inclusion of the topic itself, or through relegation of Roma to an additional, secondary group of victims ("as well as", "also", and so on). These discursive patterns reconfirm, rather than contest, the widespread Roma exclusion prevalent across Europe in employment, housing, health, and education, as European Commission Roma Civil Monitoring reports demonstrate (European Commission 2019). Second, we have evidenced the predominance of the perpetrator's viewpoint along with a disregard for Romani voices in textbook discourses on the Roma Holocaust. This finding echoes the overwhelming mass-media representations of Roma as victims of persecution (Cangár, Kotvanová, and Szép 2003; Messing and Bernáth 2017;). Third, the omission of explicit refutation of the Roma Holocaust equally reflects the absence of public condemnation of current collective crimes and injustices by European states and their representatives in many countries whose textbooks were analysed here (European Roma Rights Centre 2019). These discursive themes relate to the dearth of responsibility and acknowledgement of Roma exclusion, prejudice, persecution, and overall antigypsyism within European societies today. Moreover, the analysis showed the limits of Roma Holocaust textbook representation in promoting a human rights narrative, paralleled by the negligence of European societies and states to guarantee the human rights of Roma.

There are important lessons to be learned here. In May 2020, in the middle of a COVID-19 lockdown, a neo-fascist group in Hungary marched in the city of Budapest, demanding that the government end what they inadvertently referred to as "gypsy criminality". A week later, the Roma Holocaust memorial in the city was vandalized with the phrase "eradicating Gypsies equals eradicating crime" (Bhabha and Matache 2020). As our analysis has shown, similar problematic phrases in school textbooks used in quotation marks, but left unrefuted, also refer to "Gypsy criminality" as a reason for the Roma Holocaust. The eerie resemblance between these educational discourses and the slogans of neo-fascist vandals underlines, once more, the urgency of explicitly and specifically condemning the atrocities of the Roma Holocaust, of including more Romani perspectives and voices in narrating the Holocaust, and avoiding weak or ineffective linguistic structures to refute perpetrators' beliefs and actions, while presenting content within a human rights framework and promoting the values of justice and equality.

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