

Propositions

Belonging to the dissertation **Plotlines of Victimhood** **The Holocaust in German and Dutch History Textbooks, 1960-2010**

By Marc van Berkel

1. In German and Dutch history textbooks, the Western European perspective on the Holocaust continues to dominate by almost exclusively focusing on Auschwitz-Birkenau.
2. Contrary to their German counterparts, Dutch history textbooks published between 1960 and 2010 continue to narrate the *intentionalist* approach to the Holocaust, still considering Hitler and Himmler to be the sole masterminds behind the persecutions and mass murders.
3. Through the consultation of teachers, academics, curriculum experts and other institutional agents, a process of mediation in Germany is set in motion which guarantees consensus in curricula development and quality control in textbook production.
4. In recent German history textbooks, WWII and the Holocaust are narrated from a European perspective, whereas in textbooks from the Netherlands these topics continue to be embedded in a national context, thus avoiding proper facing of problematic aspects of that past.
5. Using the language of the perpetrators in Holocaust narratives in history textbooks without proper context or further explanation can lead to misunderstandings, and, at worst, to unconscious absorption of Nazi ideology.
6. If history textbooks do not offer a platform for open and critical historical exploration, contested views and serious debate, these can rightfully be called 'weapons of mass instruction'.
7. Better history textbooks offer multiple perspectives, consistency with the latest historiographical findings and a more international approach.
8. Historical thinking in education and historical remembrance in public history are sometimes opposed concepts that can neutralize contested historical topics.
9. Spielberg's feature film *Schindler's List* should not be used as a didactic source for the Holocaust in education.

10. The fact that, in January 2017, German politician Björn Höcke (AfD) called the Berlin *Holocaust-Mahnmal* a 'monument of shame', reflects a dramatic change in the status of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in Germany.
11. The presence of Yoko Ono in the recording studios and her relationship with John Lennon cannot be considered as the main reasons for the disintegration of The Beatles in 1970.