



Exploring Children's literature and its relationship with Historical context in *"The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas"*

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Abstract : This research paper focuses on the using of Children's literature to delves into the historical context on the complicated education of Holocaust and the cruelties of War to the young readers, using the novel "*The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*" by John Boyne as a case study. This novel, set in the backdrop of the brutal reality of Holocaust and the World War II, where the protagonist, a Nazi- young boy bridges the gap between the innocence and the harsh realities of the past, making it an essential education tool.

KEY WORDS: *Children's literature, Historical context, Holocaust education, World War II, "The Boy in the StripedPyjamas," JohnBoyne*

INTRODUCTION:

The boy in the Stripped pyjamas is a fictional work written by John Boyne an Irish novelist born in Dublin. His novel was published in 2006 which talks about World War II history and the cruelties of war between Nazis and Jews with Holocaust education through the eyes of a protagonist, Bruno, a nine-year old boy whose father is the commandant of Auschwitz, and the developed friendship with a Jewish detainee names Shmuel, a same nine year old boy. The novel was inspired by John, who was a dedicated student of Holocaust- related literature.

This novel is considered to be the fable, which means a fictional work that brings out moral truths than mere imagination. The novel tells the story from a young boy's perspective, maintaining simplicity and innocence without overly complicated violence, placing it within the genre of children's literature. This novel teaches the young readers about the brutality of wars and educates them about the morality and help them takes the path of righteousness.

The novel is set in Auschwitz, a concentration camp situated in Poland operated by Nazi Germany during 1942, where the protagonist Bruno moves to the Auschwitz which he mispronounces as "Out- With" after his father was promoted as a commandant by Adolf Hitler, whose title the Führer that Bruno often mispronounces as Fury. Though he misses his old house in Berlin, Bruno who loves to explore, went on an expedition on his own on the backside of his house where he saw a farm with a crowd of people wore a same dress, striped pyjamas. As a child he doesn't know about the cruelty of separating humans regarding their race. This makes the whole plot to understand the impact of brutality of the humans to the other humans itself.

CHILDREN LITERATURE IN RELATION TO HISTORICAL CONTEXT.

During World War II Southern Poland was annexed by Germany and created a largest concentration camp and extermination camp, where the Nazi's bring the Jewish people as slaves and to storm them in a small airtight room as big crowds and kill them by leaking chemical gas which called holocaust. Nazi Germans murdered millions of Jews considering them impure to the German society calling it ethnic cleansing. The German Occupation of Poland came to an end as the Soviet Red Army forced the German Military to retreat through the country towards Berlin in 1944 and early 1945.

These harsh truths are narrated through the perspective of the young protagonist, Bruno who doesn't know the people around him are the real barbarians who lacks humanity. Admist this Bruno grows up as an innocent child who sees this world as a beautiful, kind filled place. When he got injured and a Jewish servant who treated him was order not to disclose this to the commandant by Bruno's mother. She said,

"If the Commandant asks, we'll say that I cleaned Bruno Up"

Here as a child, Bruno got angry because his mother took credit for something other has done. But the readers' can understand the discrmination and bias powered over the poor life of Jewish innocents by the soldiers.

When Bruno shifted to Auschwitz he saw a fence from his room which he thought as a farm and wants to make friends from those people there. So he asked his father, about them which he says,

*“Those people... Well, they're not people at all, Bruno.
At least not as we understand the term, but you shouldn't be worrying about them right now.
They're nothing to do with you. You have nothing whatsoever in common with them.
Just settle into your new home and be good.”*

The Fence which divides the camp and Bruno's house, it serves as a symbol of division between Jews and Nazi's. The fence piqued Bruno's curiosity, as he initially believed it to be a farm, leading him to explore and question the boundaries and restrictions placed upon him.

"We're not supposed to be friends, you and me. We're meant to be enemies. Did you know that?"

This is a conversation between the protagonist, Bruno, and his friend Shmuel. It highlights the stark contrast between the innocence and lack of prejudice in children, represented by Bruno, and the divisive and hateful ideologies of the adults around them during the holocaust.

Despite the societal expectations and the hatred that surround them, Bruno and Shmuel's friendship continues to develop. Their friendship challenges the dehumanization and prejudice promoted by the Nazi regime and emphasizes the capacity for empathy and connection even in the face of extreme circumstances.

CONCLUSION

This research project explores children's literature and its profound relationship with the historical context in 'The Boy in the Striped Pajamas' by John Boyne; it uncovered a narrative that navigates the complexities of introducing young readers to the dark and challenging history of the Holocaust. Along with crafted storytelling, serves as a testament to the power of literature to convey historical events to a younger audience while maintaining a delicate balance between innocence and reality.

This research paper also focuses on how literature can be a bridge between childhood innocence. Using the narratives of a young kid, the author conveys the harsh truth in a straightforward and understandable manner. This novel teaches the readers the value of humanity, individual moral responsibilities, and the consequences of prejudice. This proves that literature has the power to both inform and inspire, even when confronting the darkest chapters of our past. In conclusion, this research papers sheds light on the Holocaust education through children novel, that the author offering valuable lessons that resonate with readers of all ages.

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