

Brief analysis of historical inaccuracy in literature

Literature



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Brief Analysis of Historical Inaccuracy in Literature Literature is among the most important sources of historical and cultural education; it is arguably much more essential to the public before the prevalence of motion pictures. Hence, the core idea, the depiction of background and even the most trivial details in literature can somehow shape the readers' understandings of a person, an ethnicity group, a nation and a form of culture. Therefore, literature has the burden of being historically accurate.

In the case of many German tales about anti-Semitism, cultural intolerance and ethnic discrimination against Jews are explicit. The tales depict Jews as blasphemers, murderers and liars, but the more interesting phenomenon is the fate of all these Jews in the tales, where they are labeled, expelled and executed. If we review the history of Jews during WWI, in which they were first forced to wear the Star of David as symbol, then expelled from normal activities and driven to ghettos, and finally persecuted in concentration camps, we can find the strong similarity between the tales and the reality.

Perhaps, part of the motivations behind the Holocaust is the negative understandings or hostility cultivated with these anti-Semitic tales. In my childhood, I watched the movie of Cleopatra and started to consider Octavia as a negative image, despite that Augustus was the greatest emperor of Rome. Similarly, many German children's understandings of Jews as villains from the tales would have profound impact on their future. Furthermore, tragic and catastrophic events tend to create a deeper negation, which is why literature referring to tragic events should be more cautious regarding historical accuracy.

For example, children's sympathy of the girl in *The Girl Who Was Killed by Jews* can create considerable hatred against Jews. Likewise, when I saw a review to a book about *Battle of Outburst* saying that Germans are all murderers because their ancestors were all butchers, know another hatred against Germans is being cultivated with inaccurate or biased literature of *Vowel*.