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Eco Voices of Children in War-torn Environment

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Abstract

This paper aims to shed light on children's literature (written by children themselves) from the perspective of children's rights especially after the issuing of the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention brought to the fore a group in society that has for a long time been invisible and discriminated against on the base of age. The paper tries to tackle the gap in the implementation of these rights and encouraging the shift from Geneva scene to the grassroots where children's rights have to be realized in actual context. The debate on children's rights has become a technical debate on the most effective and efficient way to implement children's rights. Although there are several rights secured to the child by international conventions yet most of these rights are not secured to the children in war zones, there is a gap between what is stated and what is applied. How far such rights are applied and ensured to all the children worldwide especially in the context of war and armed conflicts? Therefore, this paper will focus on the marginalized voice of the unheard child by studying war memoirs written by children and will try to bridge such gap by exploring the applicability of the rights of children in cases of wars and political tension. In addition to trying to bridge the gap in the critical theories dealing with children's rights by extending the scope of toxic discourse theory to include war as it is considered a threat to both the environment and humans.

Keywords: Children's Right, Memoirs, Children's Literature, War, Trauma, Testimonial Literature, Toxic Discourse, Environment, Marginalization, UN Convention For the Rights of the Child

Children's Rights: An Overview

In 1919 after World War 1, Eglantyne Jebb, a British social reformer and former teacher, and her sister Dorothy Buxton, founded the Save the Children Fund in London to provide assistance and protection to children who have experienced war whether in Europe or outside Europe. In 1920, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Save the Children Fund was organized and structured around the International Save the Children Union. On 23 February 1923, the International Save the Children Union adopted the first version of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child during its fourth general assembly. The draft was later ratified during the fifth general assembly, on 28 February 1924 then Jebb sent this document to the League of Nations. In 1924, the League of Nations adopted the Declaration of the rights of the child (Geneva Declaration). It was the first document to affirm specific rights to the children and the responsibility of adults towards them. (Fass)

After World War 2, the United Nations was founded in 1945, it took over the Geneva Declaration in 1959. By adopting the Declaration of the Rights of the Child it tried to overcome the shortcomings in the Geneva Declaration which were being only about the obligation of the adults towards the children without treating the child as an individual in addition to not being legally binding to the states that had ratified it. In 1989, it was the International Year of the Child followed by the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations on 20 November 1989. The

convention is the most widely adopted children's rights treaty in history, it changed the status of the child from a passive object to an individual with distinct set of rights (Fass).

Since the adoption of the UN Convention on the rights of the child in 1989, there was a shift in the view of the children from passive objects to social actors and active agents, not individuals with needs but individuals with rights which was not secured in the previous Declarations. It brought to the fore a group in society that has for a long time been invisible and discriminated against on the base of age as childhood starts from day one and ends at the age of 18. Before the convention the child was viewed as an incompetent object in need of protection because of its vulnerability. The children's rights movement as a counter-movement to the child protection movement, which considered childhood as a period of socialization in or preparation for adulthood or a growth towards autonomy, presented an alternative model for dealing with children as active agents supported by the new sociology of childhood. The convention led to a change in the childhood image as the child is now considered as autonomous human being.

The idea of considering children as humans did not exist before as "The concept of childhood, as Aries (1962) states, is relatively new; in previous times childhood did not exist and children were not treated as individuals in their own right, but rather as chattels or appendages" (Boylan and Ing 5). The convention opened the discussion on the position of children in society. Through the convention a framework was created that shows respect for children's rights and assert the importance of the civil society and NGOs in drafting and implementing the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The principles of the UNCRC need to be translated into national legislation

and governmental structures to ensure its practice. The debate on children's rights has become a technical debate on the most effective and efficient way to implement children's rights, how best to monitor this implementation and how this can be organized.

It is also stated in the same context:

Children may need protection against the cruelty, indifference, exploitation and ignorance of some adults and some governments, but the way in which the political system couches such protection in the language of rights may be seen as a rhetorical device rather than a serious attempt to liberate children or provide them with political or economic power. (King 392)

King wanted to shed light on the way governments talk about rights while never applying them. He wanted to show the gap in the application. What is being missed in the discourse of Children's rights is "critique" (Evans 1048). Evans explained furtherly that there must be a shift from talking about the laws and rights to the real context in which it should be implemented. And that is what the researcher will try to cover, the shift from analyzing the text of the UNCRC towards examining the contexts in which it is applied.

The UN Convention has 54 articles securing several rights for the child that must be ensured and granted to every child as stated in the following article:

Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social

origin, property, disability, birth or other status. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 2)

The previous article states that all children everywhere shall be granted such rights without any discrimination and regardless to their community condition. But in the context of war and armed conflicts how far are such rights applied and ensured to all the children worldwide? Or is it just what Scheingold refers to as "the myth of rights" (21)? What Scheingold means by the myth of rights is that these rights are not applied on real life although there are laws and rights which guaranteed them. For example in the following articles 6, 19, 29, 31 and 38 which deal with the rights that the children in war are deprived from unlike any other child the Convention states the following:

In article six, it entitled the right of life to all the children regardless the welfare of their country and the government has to ensure this to the most possible extent.

Article 6

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 3)

Definitely this is not secured for the children in the war zones although the Convention is binding to the countries that signed it but there is a gap in the implementation.

According to article nineteen, the child should not be exposed to any kind of mental or physical mistreatment.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 5)

Again this right also is not guaranteed in the war zones. Children are both mentally and physically injured and no one in charge as stated in the article interfered to prevent such injuries although the convention is binding to the signed countries.

In article twenty nine this specific point (e) is chosen because it asserts the importance of the clean environment which is not present for these children.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 9)

In article thirty one the UN entitled the child the right to play, to have fun and to enjoy his childhood not to be living in a degrading environment full of fire and bombs.

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to

participate freely in cultural life and the arts. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 9)

The importance of article thirty eight is that it specifies and asserts the same rights for the children in the war zone and did not exclude them.

Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 10)

By stating the previous article, the researcher is trying to highlight the gap in the implementation of the Convention.

In the previous five articles, the convention states that the child has the right to live safely in a clean environment without being exposed to any physical or mental violence (ex: trauma) or injury in addition to having the right to play and leisure while the states parties have to secure such rules even in the time of wars or armed conflicts. Joanna Santa Barbara listed in her article "Impact of War on Children and Imperative to End War" the following impacts of war on children:

Death: Hundreds of thousands of children die of direct violence in war each year,

Injury: Children suffer a range of war injuries. Certain weapons affect them particularly a landmine explosion is more likely to kill or seriously injure a child than an adult. Thousands of children suffer landmine injuries each year.

Disability: Millions of children are disabled by war, many of whom have grossly inadequate access to rehabilitation services. A child may have to wait up to 10

years before having a prosthetic limb fitted. Children who survive landmine blasts rarely receive prostheses that are able to keep up with the continued growth of their limbs.

Illness: Conditions for maintenance of child health deteriorate in war – nutrition, water safety, sanitation, housing, access to health services. There may be loss of immunity to disease vectors with population movement. Refugee children are particularly vulnerable to the deadly combination of malnutrition and infectious illness. **Psychological suffering:** children are exposed to situations of terror and horror during war – experiences that may leave enduring impacts in posttraumatic stress disorder.

Moral and spiritual impacts: The experience of indifference from the surrounding world, or, worse still, malevolence may cause children to suffer loss of meaning in their construction of themselves in their world. They may have to change their moral structure and lie, steal, and sell sex to survive. They may have their moral structure forcibly dismantled and replaced in training to kill as part of a military force. **Social and cultural losses:** children may lose their community and its culture during war, sometimes having it reconstituted in refugee or diaspora situations. (891-892)

The previous quotation shows the impacts of war on children and how they suffer due to its consequences although these rights are guaranteed to them by the Convention. The following two articles 12 and 13 state that the child has the right of free expression and

being heard. It gives the child the right of genuine participatory. Although the focus now is on the children, it is on the children through the prism of adult lens not through their own lens and this does not allow them to be heard only seen.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 4)

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice. ("Convention on the Rights of the Child" 4)

After examining the previous two issues the researcher came out with the following observations:

There are rights secured to childhood through international conventions yet there is a gap in the application of the convention between what is stated and what is applied in real life. For example, although the convention gave the right to the child to have clean and safe environment, this is not applied during war. Also the child voice is marginalized in literary studies as most of the scholars working in the field of children literature deal with works of art written by grownups not children themselves and a few of them if found

work on works written by children through the lens of the trauma theory not children's rights perspective. As result there is a lack of direct critical theory dealing with children's rights.

In the attempt to bridge such gap and to explore the applicability of the rights of children in cases of wars and political tension the researcher will deal with several approaches in her study of memoirs written by children about their experience during war and armed conflict in their countries. First, to cover the point of clean, peaceful and safe environment the researcher will extend the toxic discourse theory to include war. Second, to cover the point of the marginalization of the child and the neglect of his/her work of art, as it may be fragmented and incomplete, the testimonial literature will be used to justify the researcher's choice.

Theoretical Framework:

This thesis examines two theories which investigate and provide a comprehensive view to examine children's rights and the marginalization of the children.

Toxic Discourse:

Lawrence Buell stated in his article "Toxic Discourse" that "the fear of a poisoned world is being increasingly pressed, debated, debunked, and reiterated from many disciplinary vantage points" (639). But toxicity is considered as a discourse whose force is derived from an anxiously industrialized culture. Also toxic discourse challenges the traditional understandings of what counts as an environmentalist movement. As Buell stated: "it insists on the interdependence of ecocentric and anthropocentric values" (639).

It insists that the environmentalists should give more attention to human and social health in order to thrive or even survive. The fear of environmental poisonous is the main energizer behind the environmental justice theory which states the sacredness of mother earth and affirms the right to be free from ecological destruction. Toxic discourse aims to raise the awareness of the people by alerting them to the dangers of toxification of nature resulting from for example: pesticides, nuclear waste or any toxic chemical waste. As Buell states:

The modern nature that toxic discourse recognizes as the physical environment humans actually inhabit is not a holistic spiritual or biotic economy but a network or networks within which, on the one hand, humans are biotically imbricated (like it or not) and, on the other hand, nature figures as modified (like it or not) by techne. This view is neither preservationist, given its recognition of the impact of human powers and the legitimacy of human needs, nor conservationist, since its goal is not resource management so much as effective symbiosis with the physical environment. (657)

Toxic discourse is based on anxieties about environmental poisoning for which there is copious historical evidence. It is a “discourse of allegation rather than of proof” (Buell 659). It encourages everyone to have second nature another perspective of nature to visualize humanity in relation to the environment not as solitary escapee or consumer but to be acknowledged by their necessary interdependence.

One of the aims of the research is to extend the scope of toxic discourse to include war as it is considered a threat to both the environment and humans. The consequences of war and the weapons used led to the destruction of the environment and the biosphere

including the humans themselves. Also its effects extend for many years especially after the development of modern weaponry and bombs. Some places after war should be evacuated and become dangerous for any human to live in as it become literally toxic. In addition to the destruction of the people's life for instance children instead of growing up playing in the gardens enjoying fresh air, they are surrounded by destruction, rotten corpses and massacres. This apocalyptic scene of war-torn environment is opposing to the environmental justice that grant the right of mother earth to be free from ecological destruction.

Furthermore, it coincides with the UNCRC which gives the child the right to have a clean and safe environment. Besides, war creates a degraded environment which threats peace sustainability and deprives the child of his/her rights. As a result of the war, the bond between the child and the nature is broken or not even found.

Testimonial Literature:

The definition of testimonio (Latin American Spanish word) according to John Beverley in his article "The Margin at the Centre: On "Testimonio" (Testimonial Narrative):

a novel or novella-length narrative in book or pamphlet (that is, printed as opposed to acoustic) form, told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts, and whose unit of narration is usually a "life" or a significant life experience. (12-13)

The literal translation of the word testimonio as testimony, as in the act of testifying or bearing witness in a legal or religious sense. Testimony has always been there at the

margin of literature, representing in particular those subjects—the child, the native, the woman, the insane, the criminal, the proletarian—excluded from authorized representation when it was a question of speaking and writing for them. It was developed as a new genre especially after the wide movement of national liberation as a kind of resistance and giving voice to the unheard (Beverley). The importance of the testimony is that it communicates a problem of repression and act of survival which is implicated in the act of narration itself. Beverly pointed out that “unlike the novel, testimonio promises by definition to be primarily concerned with sincerity rather than literariness” (14). The “I” of the speaker is the voice that demands being recognized and wanted to capture the reader’s attention, it is a mark of a desire not to be silenced or defeated anymore to change its position from being excluded or marginalized to the center. He argued also that literature is not exclusive for certain group only, the testimony gives a space for anyone to write about his experience even if it lacks proper writing skill:

What needs to be noted here is that the assumed lack of writing ability or skill on the part of the narrator of the testimonio, even in those cases where it is written instead of narrated orally, also contributes to the "truth-effect" the form generates (Beverley 15).

The aim of the testimonial narrative is to evoke an absent polyphony of other voices, other possible lives and experiences regardless of the writing ability or skill.

The aim of the previous approach is to show the rationale behind the choice of the children memoirs to be studied in this research. Also to prove that there is gap in the implementation of the rights entitled to the children by UNCRC. Although more than one

article give the freedom of expression to the children but not much scholars take it into consideration to hear their voices and shed light on their work of art. Most of the children literature body deals with work of arts written by grown-ups in the voice of the children not children themselves. One of the objectives of this research is to hear the voiceless excluded children and to bring the margin at the center of discourse.

Research Objectives and Questions:

Hence, the main objectives of the thesis are first to examine the extent of implementation of the UNCRC on the ground. The second objective is to try to bridge the gap in the critical theories dealing with children's rights. The third objective is to give voice to the unheard children in war zones and on the other hand to shed light on some forgotten wars. The fourth objective is to extend the toxic discourse theory to include war due to its toxicity and effect on the environment. Therefore, the study attempts to answer the following questions: To what extent the UNCRC is being applied? How to shift from the Geneva scene to the grassroots level where children's rights have to be realized in actual context? Who marginalizes the children? Why are children treated as an object who are incompetent instead of active agents? Why memoirs written by children should be examined? What is the effect of war on the children's environment? What counts as "children's literature"? How does it differ from adults writing children's literature?

Part one: Eco-voices of children in war-torn environment during Balkan War 1991-1995 as presented in *Zlata's Diary* by Zlata Filipovic

Zalata was born in Sarajevo in 1980. Her life was changed upside down. The family plunged into a primitive existence without water, electricity or gas with limited food supplies surrounded by bombs and shells. Bosnian Muslims and Croats were forcibly expelled or killed as part of an ethnic cleansing process. There was also evidence of death camps and genocide. An estimated half of Bosnia's prewar population of 4.3 million was displaced in the war and at least 100000 people were killed. Her diary was published in 1993.

Zlata was a child living a normal life when everything turned upside down. On April 5, 1992 she decided to start writing everything about the war in her diary which she called "Mimmy". "I am afraid of War" (208) that was her words before the beginning of the war. It shows her psychological state of fear although the UNCRC ensured safety to all children everywhere. Soon after this heavy shelling and bombing started. "War is no joke, it destroys, kills, burns, separates, brings unhappiness" (209).

If the toxic discourse theory is talking about the toxicity of nature so bombs falling on parks where the children used to play is a destruction to both nature and childhood. Due to this explosion one of Zlata's friends lost her kidney and the other was dead. Now the war moved to another level from causing physiological suffering to children to physical injuries and deaths. After this incidence Zlata decided not to write about herself and to dedicate her diary to write about "war, death, injuries, shells, sadness and sorrow" (211). War deprives children from their childhood so instead of feeling safe playing in gardens and enjoying their leisure time they have to live with explosions, horrors and death "SLAUGHTER! MASSACRE! HORROR! CRIME! BLOOD! SCREAMS!

TEARS! DESPAIR!” (212). Is it fair for a child to live in such a horrific atmosphere where bombs and dismembered bodies are everywhere?

Regardless of the physical and the mental effects of the war, children also suffer from malnutrition and the absence of electricity. Children in warzones are tortured in different ways whether from hunger, misery, fear, despair, shooting or death.

A child without games, without friends, without the sun, without birds, without nature, without fruit, without chocolate or sweets with just a little powdered milk.

In short, a child without childhood. A wartime child. I am one of thousands of other children in this town that is being destroyed. (214)

In this quotation, she summarizes up the condition of each and every child in the warzone and their realization of their deprivation due to war. They are missing their childhood and every aspect of life despite the presence of the UNCRC which secured them all their rights even if they are in a warzone shedding light on the gap in its implementation.

Nature is supposed to play an important part in each child life but in the time of war instead of enjoying their time in gardens or mountains they spent their time in houses and cellars leaving the parks empty, deserted with no children or joy. Not only humans who suffer but also animals and all living creature are suffering from the conditions of war.

Shifting to the state parties who are supposed to protect children, Zlata thinks that the real conditions are different “I’m “young” and politics are conducted by “grownups” but I think we “young” would do it better. We certainly wouldn’t have chosen war” (220). She also added that she believed that the kids (politicians) are playing games and it is

them whom they are playing with. They are living with no electricity, gas and food and the politicians didn't reach an agreement to finish their misery.

The effects of war had no limits if affected everything, after two years, there were no tree blossoms and no birds, there is no sound of birds twittering or noisy children, no games war had destroyed everything. Young people were without arms and legs "they've had their childhood taken away from them and without that they can't be children" (223).

By the 17th of September 1993, 15000 were dead in Sarajevo 3000 of them were children, and 50000 permanent invalids. "I am convinced now that it will never end. Some evil people who hate children and ordinary folk" (229). On December 1993 Zlata managed to flee with her family to Paris in order to publish her diary leaving her country, friends and everything behind suffering from war, hunger and death, without gas, water and electricity. At that time Sarajevo was not a safe place to live in as a child or even a human.

War destruct everything nature and people's life. it deprives children from enjoying their childhood having fun living in a healthy and safe environment instead they are living in horror, fear and despair waiting for more bombs and shells to explode ending their miserable life.

Part Two: Eco-voices of children in war-torn environment during the Syrian crisis as presented in *Dear World: A Syrian Girl's story of war and plea for peace* By Bana AlAbed

Bana AlAbed, born in 2009 in Aleppo, Syria, is known worldwide for her tweets during the siege of the city in 2016 and for her subsequent calls for peace and an end to

all global conflict. Her tweets have earned her legions of admirers around the world by giving a remarkable insight into the daily horrors of life in the city, including airstrikes, hunger, and the prospect of her family's death. In December 2016, Bana and her family were safely evacuated from Aleppo to Turkey. Her book was published in English in 2017 while she was in Turkey. She dedicates her book to every child suffering in a war [Alabed].

Bana is a Syrian girl her life was totally changed when the war started in Syria. It all started when a bomb fell on Aleppo near their house and that was her first interaction with war. She was afraid that she might lose her father or mother and that feeling of horror and anxiety of loss was new to her. From this day on everyday there were more bombing and bombing. She started to gain more experience about war and bombs "There are many different kinds. I learned about all of them quickly" (38). There was a dramatic shift in her life from a child enjoying her childhood to a child war who started to leave her childhood behind her and learn how to survive.

During war the safest place is the basement which is cold and dark with grey cements walls. So instead of staying in a healthy place filled with fresh air like gardens or parks children had to stay in such places to save their life. The time spent in the basement is not restricted sometimes it is only hours other times it is days.

After the incident of her uncles' kidnapping now her grandfather decided to send his two youngest sons to Egypt to be safe. Bana was sad as she started to experience the feeling of leaving your beloved and not being able to live together anymore. Diaspora is one of the prices you paid in a war "Family is all supposed to be together, not some here, some there" (88) . That wasn't the worst experience that she had, when the soldiers came

to their house asking for the men in the family Bana was afraid she thought they would shoot them. Although she got use too bombs and shooting but still she did not get use to misery, horror and despair.

As a child in a warzone, she was deprived of many things:

Mummy decided that I couldn't go to school anymore. It wasn't safe, because a bomb could fall on the school. The regime does not like schools, so they bombed them a lot. I had to stop going swimming and to the park too. I was almost getting to be a really good swimmer until I couldn't go anymore. I also couldn't play outside with my best friend, Yasmin, because a big bomb might fall on us. (59)

So instead of having fun and getting education she had to stay at home to save her life although the UNCRC states different rules and rights.

The harsh conditions of war is not suitable children they cannot live with no water, food and electricity. They deserve better living conditions. Also war is causing toxicity of the environment due to the usage of chemicals and different kind of bombs such as: chlorine and phosphorus, it is not safe to live in an unhealthy place as this.

Some babies had been born sick because of the war. I was supposed to have a baby cousin, but he wasn't born because he didn't have any bones. There wasn't enough food, and there were so many bad chemicals and dust in the air all the time that made it smell like metal and burning oil. (78)

Despite all of the bombing and explosions, it is totally different to see your friend under rubble killed because of a bomb:

Then one of the men lifted a body out of the rocks, and there was more screaming from Yasmin's mum. It was Yasmin. She was floppy like she was asleep, and had a lot of blood and dust on her. I couldn't move or breathe because I was so scared seeing my friend like that. (123)

Everything was not as it should be in Syria children are being killed instead of growing up safely, parks changed from a playing area to cemeteries where they buried killed people "all the cemeteries became full, so they put dead people in the ground in the parks." (125)

Sarcastically, on Bana's seventh birthday her wish was "that no one else would die". Is it supposed for child to have such a wish? It foreshadows the fear that she was living in and the sense of lost she had gained due to the war. Where is the UN from what is happening to the children and how they are mentally and physically tortured?

After being in siege for Three months Bana started to ask her parents "So there is no good reason for war. It is not right for so many people and children to die because after everyone is dead, then what? What will be different?" (153) . So that's how she started writing on Twitter asking for peace and help, she wanted the whole world to see what was happening in Syria and to stop the war. "Now I could tell people about how we didn't have any food or medicine and how bad the bombs were. I didn't know if anyone would listen or care, but I hoped that they would please do something to stop the war." (154)

When a child lives in a warzone he/she starts to learn more about war and survival, he/she wants to feel that someone may hear their voice and finally will put an end to their

misery. So in the case of Bana Twitter and her hashtag #Save Aleppo was her way to make her voice heard “ I was telling people not to forget East Aleppo” (161). Even the people there felt it great that may be someone would hear their screaming and cries and helped them.

The UNCRRC provides the children all over the world with rights and the state parties have to ensure their implementation so what about Bana and her peers “I had never felt worse inside before: hungry and thirsty and tired and scared and sad and freezing cold, since we had no heat or blankets” (182). She is deprived of all forms of life how could a child grow up in such environment? Is this is the clean air that a child should breath “The air smelled very bad—worse than when the tires were burning. It is a smell I will never forget, no matter how much I want to”. (193)

Finally, Bana and her family succeeded to flee to Turkey with the help of her friends on Twitter and the Turkish government but what about the other children in Syria? How many child are killed during the Syrian war? How many family could not have the same opportunity that Bana had? “And children are still dying and getting hurt every day—like Abdulbaset Ta’an, a little boy I visited in the hospital who is almost the same age as me and lost his legs to a bomb.” (215)

Bana’s memoir sheds light on the danger of war to children and how it destroys their childhood.

I turned eight while I was working on my book, so I got to make a wish when I was blowing out my candles. It was hard to decide on only one wish, because I have many, like: I want to never have to hear or see a bomb again. I want to be

able to go home to live in Aleppo one day. I want a baby sister. I want to go to school and to university. But most of all, I want people to stop fighting with bombs and guns in Syria and all over the world. I want there to please be peace. I am now eight years old, and this is my wish. (216)

Conclusion:

In this research , the researchers tries to show how children in war zones are deprived from their rights stated by the UNCRC and how they are deprived from the basic needs of life although their countries have signed up the convention which should be binding. Also the researcher wants to shed light on some forgettable wars by giving voice to the children who are suffering and asking for peace.

Fortunately the war in Sarajevo had come to an end unlike the war in Syria, everyday many children are killed, injured or even living in the horrible degraded environment of the war. A solution must be found to secure the war children, the convention should be activated and implemented stop the talk about children's rights and move to the application.

In both memories, children are testifying their testimonies about what happened in their countries and about their feelings and conditions. They wanted their voice to be heard they wanted to end the war and to live peacefully, they are ambassadors of all children worldwide.

The UNCRC was found to protect war children and to secure their welfare, now after so many years war is still there and children are still suffering nothing changed. Also one

of the aims of the Convention is to empower children so they can express their own views and determine their fate. A shift is needed from analyzing the text of the Convention towards examining its context and how it is applied.

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