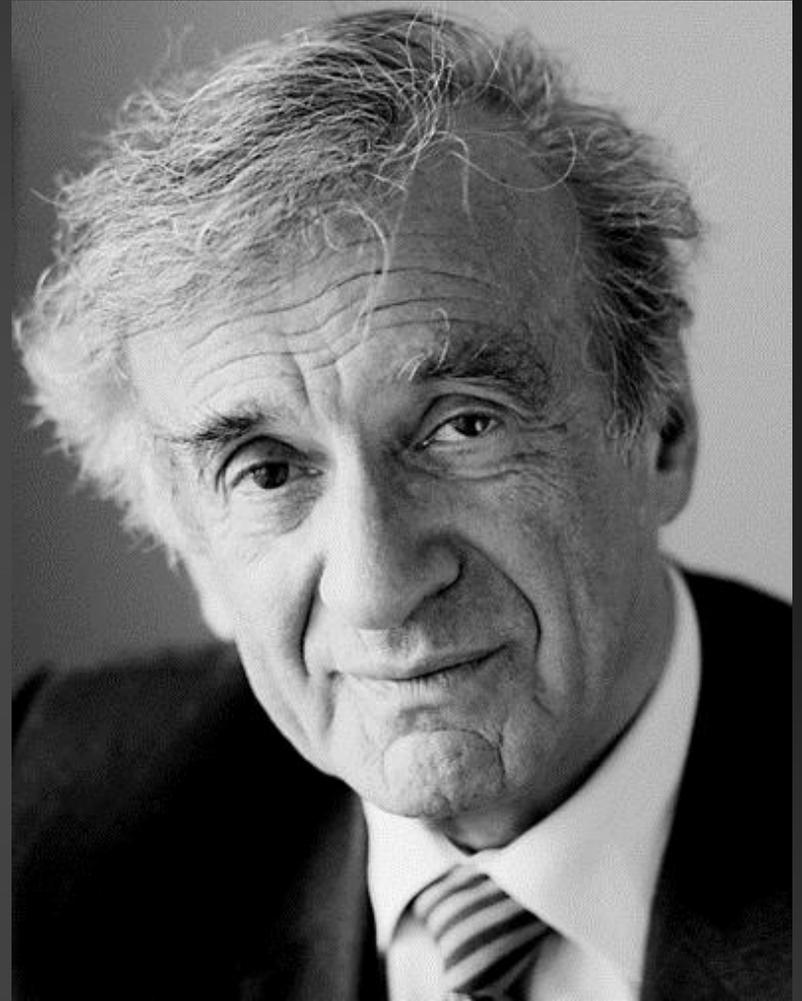


NIGHT

by Elie Wiesel



Sources:
eliewieselfoundation.org
"Elie Wiesel - Biographical." Nobelprize.org
"Holocaust Survivors' Storyteller" *Academy of Achievement*
University of Virginia American Studies Dept.
wikipedia

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Contextual background information for *Night*
- Cross-disciplinary learning (science & literature)
- Provide terminology and framework to understand the experiences of characters and people

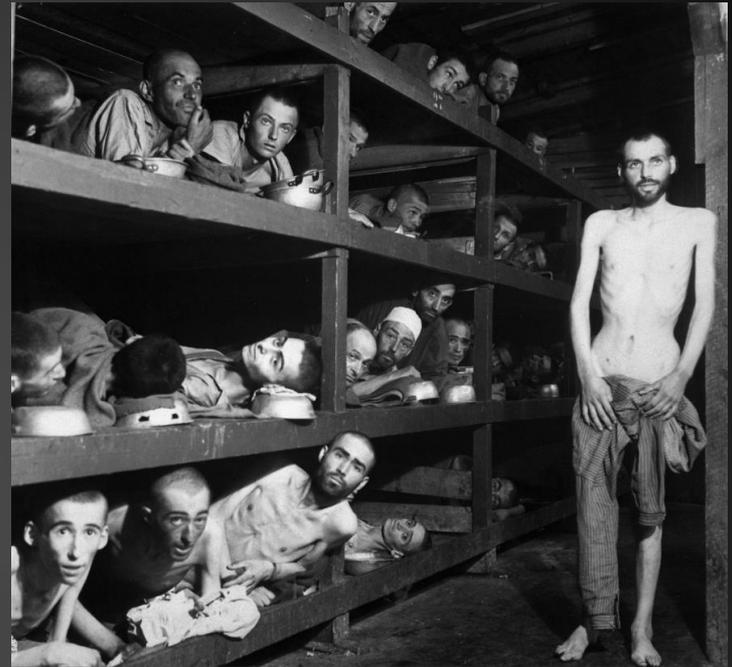
ELIE WIESEL

- Elie Wiesel was born in 1928 in Sighet, Transylvania, now part of Romania.



THE CAMPS

- At 15, Wiesel and his family were deported by the Nazis
 - Auschwitz (Poland)
 - Buna (Auschwitz sub camp)
 - Buckenwald (Germany)
 - Gleiwitz (Auschwitz sub camp)
- At 16, he was liberated (April 1945)



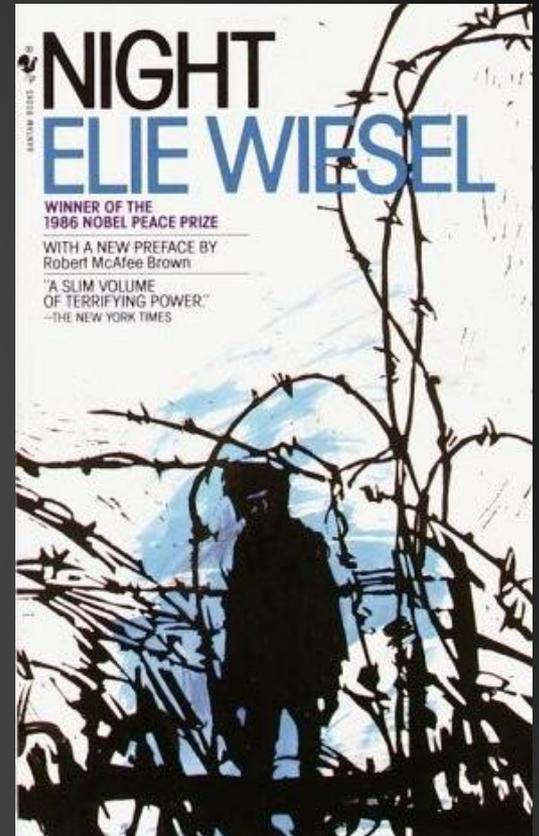
AFTER THE WAR

- Wiesel joined a transport of child survivors of Buchenwald to a rehabilitation center in France
- He moved to an orphanage for Orthodox Jews (France)
- He studied in Paris at the Sorbonne
- By 19, he was working for French newspapers
- For ten years, he observed a self-imposed vow of silence and wrote nothing about his war experience



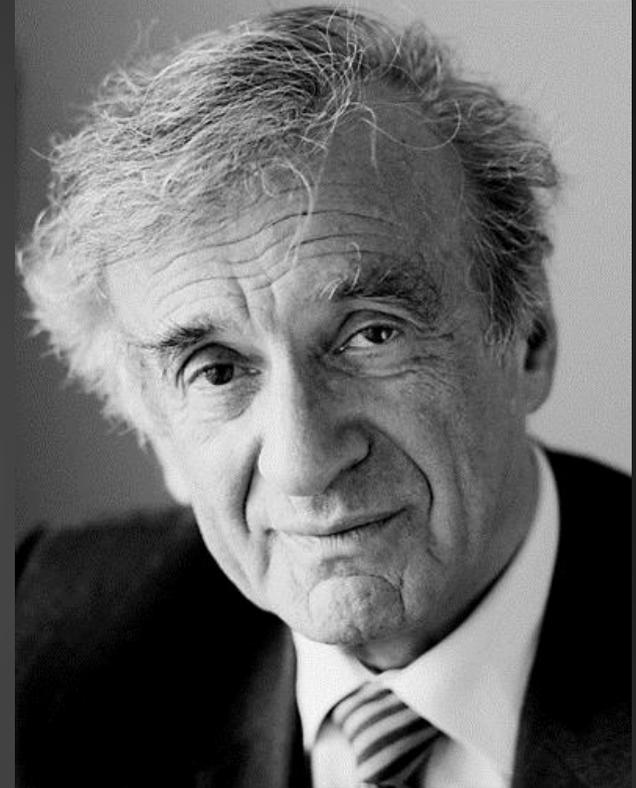
ELIE WIESEL

- In 1955, he wrote his memories in Yiddish, in a 900-page work *Un die welt hot geshvign* (And the world kept silent).
- The book was first published in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Wiesel compressed the work into a 127-page French adaptation, *La Nuit* (Night) in 1960.



ELIE WIESEL

- Wiesel moved to the US in 1950s.
- Awards include
 - Presidential Medal of Freedom
 - U.S. Congressional Gold Medal
 - National Humanities Medal
 - Medal of Liberty
 - Nobel Prize for Peace (1986)
- Elie Wiesel died on July 2, 2016 in Manhattan



THEMES IN NIGHT

- Faith (ambivalent toward God, comparison to Job)
- Night
- Silence and Absence
- Memory

“I no longer accepted God's silence” (69).

“I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides.

Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.” (Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, 1986)

“For the dead and the living, we must bear witness” (xv).

MEMORY, REMEMORY, & TRAUMA

Beloved by Toni Morrison

Night by Elie Wiesel

TERMS (MERRIAM-WEBSTER)

- **Neologism** – a new word or expression
- **Memory** – the power or process of remembering what has been learned; something that is remembered; the things learned and kept in the mind; capacity for storing information
- **Trauma** – a difficult or unpleasant experience that causes someone to have acute long-term mental or emotional problems; severe mental or emotional stress or physical injury

TRAUMA & REPRESSED MEMORY

“The Reality of Repressed Memories” Elizabeth F. Loftus (U Washington)

- Repression is one of the most haunting concepts in psychology. Something shocking happens, and the mind pushes it into some inaccessible corner of the unconscious. Later, the memory may emerge into consciousness. Repression is one of the foundation stones on which the structure of psychoanalysis rests. Recently there has been a rise in reported memories of childhood sexual abuse that were allegedly repressed for many years.

TRAUMA & REPRESSED MEMORY

“Questions and Answers about Memories of Childhood Abuse” (*American Psychological Association*)

- Some clinicians theorize that children understand and respond to trauma differently from adults. Some furthermore believe that childhood trauma may lead to problems in memory storage and retrieval. These clinicians believe that dissociation is a likely explanation for a memory that was forgotten and later recalled. Dissociation means that a memory is not actually lost, but is for some time unavailable for retrieval.

TRAUMA & REPRESSED MEMORY

“Questions and Answers about Memories of Childhood Abuse” (*American Psychological Association*)

- That is, it's in memory storage, but cannot for some period of time actually be recalled. Some clinicians believe that severe forms of child sexual abuse are especially conducive to negative disturbances of memory such as dissociation or delayed memory. Many clinicians who work with trauma victims believe that this dissociation is a person's way of sheltering himself or herself from the pain of the memory.

REMEMORY

- Rememory is a neologism from Toni Morrison's *Beloved*
- Memory is a living thing
- We relive the past when we remember, especially in cases of extreme trauma

REMEMORY

“Manifestations and Memory: A Look At Trauma, Hauntings, and ‘Rememory’” by Elizabeth Palmer

- In Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, the word “rememory” is used when the main character, Sethe, recalls moments that have been forgotten. She is faced with these uncanny re-memories—moments that are not quite familiar because they have been tucked away for so long—and at their sudden manifestation, becomes haunted by their existence...

REMEMORY

“Manifestations and Memory: A Look At Trauma, Hauntings, and ‘Rememory’” by Elizabeth Palmer

- Morrison is clearly making a distinction between “rememory” and memory. Memory is a constant knowledge and represents the moments we willingly recall. “Rememory” addresses the recollection of the things that a person has forgotten and, as Freud puts it, repressed.

QUOTES

Beloved by Toni Morrison

- "Anything dead coming back to life hurts." (65)
- "I was talking about time. It's so hard for me to believe in it. Some things go. Pass on. Some things just stay. I used to think it was my rememory. You know. Some things you forget. Other things you never do. But it's not. Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place—the picture of it—stays, and not just in my rememory, but out there, in the world. What I remember is a picture floating around out there outside my head. I mean, even if I don't think it, even if I die, the picture of what I did, or knew, or saw is still out there. Right in the place where it happened." (88)

QUOTES

Night by Elie Wiesel

- "For in the end, it is all about memory, its sources and its magnitude, and, of course, its consequences." (xv)
- "To forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time." (xv)
- "Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust."
(34)