

Night: judaism and nazis

Religion



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

English 2 Honors 4 November 2012 Complex Conflict One complex conflict in Elie Wiesel's *Night* is the conflict between Elie and himself (Man vs. Himself) that overlays the conflict where the Nazis continuously killed and beat Jews with no sympathy (Man vs. Man). The complex conflict helps to convey the theme Hatred and Death. Elie struggles to be the sole supporter for his father, who is constantly being beaten for unnecessary reasons by the Nazis. Along the journey to Gleiwitz, Elie ran with an injured foot willing to just give up and surrender his life for his foot because such great pains.

When Elie saw his father veer near him as they continued their run, Elie saw how "out of breath, out of strength, desperate (Wiesel 86)" he was and Elie stated "My father's presence was the only thing that stopped me (Wiesel 86). Elie's comment provides an indirect characterization for Elie as a caring and loving son that would not leave his father to fight alone for he knew he was his father's future. Due to the fact that Elie contemplated to whether to kill himself or support his father as he hangs on the thread between life and death.

The Nazis were aggressive and unsympathetic for their well-being. Elie's father was struggling to survive the journey for whosoever slowed down or stopped running at the pace were either shot or trampled. "They had orders to shoot anyone who could not sustain the pace. Their finger on the triggers, they did not deprive themselves of the pleasure (Wiesel 85)" exploits the theme Hatred as the Jews hold on for dear life that the Nazis find amusing, "they did not deprive themselves of the pleasure". The Nazis in fact hated the Jews for multiple reasons and loved how the Jews' memory was slowly fading.

Due to Elie's difficult choices and the hatred that the Nazis act upon through the layering of conflicts, Wiesel precisely shapes the themes of Hatred and Death. Survival was displayed throughout the book, *Night*, through Elie and other Jews that accompanied him in the camps: Elie's father, Shlomo, was constantly abused along with Elie, Elie was not going to take any blows for no one, not even his father, " he slapped my father with such force that he fell down (...) his place on all fours. I stood petrified (Wiesel 39)".

This quote displays imagery in the profound force of this SS officer brutally slapping Shlomo as Elie stood terrified and aghast at the thought that if he were to step in to protect his father he would surely get the same beating as his father. Elie loved his father dearly but he was afraid," my body was afraid of another blow this time to my head (Wiesel III). " Elie's diction clarifies " my body was afraid" as a connoted meaning of his body feeling a gaping hole as if he was falling off the earth. Elie would not move to save his father after his father's last words were his name being summoned.

Elie feared another blow for he was also weak like his father. Survival was conveyed through the test of how Elie refused to protect his father from the constant blows. Perseverance and dignity in the face of human cruelty Perseverance and dignity in the face of human cruelty conveys sympathy that the Nazis and SS officer s had for the Jews although they continued to commit this genocide. The little advice and encouragement were quite helpful in keeping the Jews weight up, " Don't lose hope: (...) muster your strength and keep your faith (Wiesel 41). The comment the young Pole, who was in charge of Elie's block, displayed an indirect characterization as a

caring and supportive Pole who despite what he has to do, feel the pain the Jews are experiencing. Although that comment supported and encouraged the Jews, he had to continue his cruelty and harshness towards them. Some Nazis could not handle the hanging of young Jews, “ This time, the LagerKapo refused to act as executioner (Wiesel 64)”. The executioner also displays indirect characterization with the pain he feels in hanging a young Jew.

The executioner presents a sympathetic character as he refuses to hang the young Jew as if he feels as if it were his son as well. He had one act of sympathy of hanging this young Jew but was unable to keep him alive for the young Jew still must be hanged. The Nazis kind heart and encouraging words were quite helpful and supportive in a way but could not assist the Jews in their escape to freedom. Faith Loss of faith became a huge problem for the Jews for they felt that instead of helping them through life they felt as if it was killing them. Elie verhears other Jews praying to God but refuses, “ I felt anger rising within me. Why should I sanctify this name? The Almighty, the eternal and terrible Master of the universe, chose to be silent (Wiesel 33). ” The syntax Elie conveys demonstrates the hatred he feels for God and how God does not save the Jews from their morbid lives. Elie believes that if God is who those Jews say they are, then he should have protected them from the Nazis so that they will not be near death in a German camp. Elie did not bother to bless god at all, “ Why, but why would I bless him? Every fiber in me rebelled. Wiesel 67)” The dialogue suggests the disbelief in his voice for God and the sacrilege he has for God. Elie would not pray for the Almighty who did not bother to save them from their deaths that behold in the

crematory. Faith was conveyed through the text due to the lack of faith that the Jews acquired during their moments of death, doubt and anger. Hatred occurred throughout the entire text. How the Nazis began to transport all the Jews to the German camps were the commencement to the Jews death. The Nazis lined the Jews in the torrid heat including children, "the heat was oppressive.

Sweat streamed from people's faces and bodies. Children were crying for water (Wiesel 16). " The diction " oppressive" suggests the heat was tyrannical. The Jews have never experienced such heat and thirst that it became something they desired for as they awaited to be counted. The children Jews were suffering the hatred of the world as the Nazis would not allow them to get even a sip of water. When the Jews were being evacuated to Gleiwitz in the frigid cold with light clothes, the Nazis yelled at the Jews to force them to go faster or get shot, " Faster, you tramps, you flea-ridden dogs! Wiesel 85)" The words " tramps" and " flea-ridden dogs" were considerable diction that implies the denoted meaning of dirty or detestable displaying the disrespect the Nazis give to the Jews. The Nazis show no sympathy for the Jews as they force them to run in the icy cold hanging on to dear life. They display no care for their well-being. Hatred was conveyed through the harsh torture and comments that the Nazis exhibited to the Jews. Loss of Innocence Loss of innocence occurred through the German camps the Jews were inhabited in. Elie was astonished of the situation he was among that he had to dream f a better place hoping where he was, was just a dream. " Soon I would wake up with a start, my heart pounding, and find that I was back in the room of my childhoodwith my books (Wiesel 32). "

The syntax articulates the diction " my childhood" was quite significant for Elie was still a child in his childhood. Elie was frightened and speechless to the things that occurred that the world kept quiet about. Elie just wanted to be back home to his family where everything was a normal life for a child for what behold him felt as if his childhood were taking in front of his eyes.

In the camps they took away their childhood forcing some children into young prostitutes, " in his " service" was a young boy, a pipel as they were called. This one had a delicate and beautiful face ---- an incredible sight in this camp. In Buna, the pipel were hated; they often displayed greater cruelty than their elders (Wiesel 63). " The author's style using quotations for " service" implies a more connoted meaning rather than a denoted meaning. The author's style with the usage of a hyphen displays the inarticulate words of describing how admirable young pipel was among the camp.

The young boy does not know that what he is doing is wrong. The pipel is in a " service" that commanders would sexually abuse him as he abuses is inmates non-sexually just cruelty. Loss of innocence was conveyed due to the fact that the German camps took their childhood and replaced it with a life that they would never do if they were not captive. Death Multiple Jews like Elie felt death surround them at every turn. When the Jews had to run through the torrid cold to another camp Zalman, a young Poland boy could no longer endure the cold no more that he had a dysentery problem and was trampled as he lowered his pants and fell to the ground.

Elie felt as if his time were near as well as Zalman's " Death enveloped me, it suffocated me. It stuck to me like glue. I felt I could touch it (Wiesel 86). " Elie felt that just one mistake would lead to his death. Elie feared dying.

When they arrived to an abandoned village where Shlomo, Elie's father, felt as if his time had ended now. Shlomo gave up and wanted to sleep even though it would lead to his death. Elie tried to encourage his father but he said, " I knew that I was no longer arguing with him (Sholomo) but with death itself, with death he (Shlomo) had already chosen (Wiesel 105). The dialogue displays an image of Shlomo's pale face looking upon his son rebelling to move just to save his life. Throughout the multitude of camps Elie felt as if he lived by chance dodging and surviving through the feeling of death and commit of suicide. Night Night displays such descriptive detail in the life the Jews inhabited in the cruel camps of the Germans. They were constantly working growing weak each and every day through the cold harsh weather with light clothes, " The days resembled the nights, and the night left in our souls the dregs of their darkness (Wiesel 100)".

The denoted meaning of " dregs" suggests the literal meaning of least valuable part of anything declaring that the Jews souls that they once had had faded as the nights devoured their strength, faith and along with their humanity. How the days resembled the nights envelops the central theme, hatred. The Nazis harsh and cruel ways in the day felt to the Jews as if it flowed to the night as well, as they were uniformly beaten repeatedly. Let alone, the cruel journey in the cold temperate weather for nearly twelve hours was quite grim as they were evacuated to a different camp, " I moved like a sleepwalker (Wiesel 87)".

All the Jews that slowed down, tripped, or even stopped running were immediately trampled or even shot if they made it out of the crowd without being trampled. Hatred was conveyed through the simile Elie uses in the

quote and how Elie's feeling of being a sleepwalker indicates that he was exhausted and that Elie was literally hanging on for his life. The abstract meaning for night would be the deaths that overshadowed the nights and resembled the days. Fire Fire helps convey hatred as the central theme in the novel, Night.

The first light of fire the Jews saw were the train ride to the German camp when they saw " the train disappeared" and " all that was left was thick, dirty smoke (Wiesel 6). " They had said the train was headed to burning fiery place ahead that lead to the death of some Jews. The symbol for this quote was Fire= Death because of the " smell of burning flesh (Wiesel 28). " Imagery was clarified conveys hatred as the theme using fire as its symbol by parading the image of a dark train leading to a fiery, morbid smoke that had the vile smell of dead corpses of Jews and even baby Jews.

The Nazis delivering a train towards a " thick, dirty smoke" inserted fear into the Jews as they tried to demolish all of " Jewishculture, Jewish religion, Jewish tradition, therefore Jewish memory (Wiesel viii)" with burning them alive. Judaism as a Culture & Tradition Judaism as a culture and traditions convey the central theme, hatred. The normal traditions and cultures the Jews conclude before they became captive to the Germans, were well respected " My mother was beginning to think it was high time to find an appropriate match for Hilda (Wiesel 8). Jews selected their matches for their daughters who are developing into a young woman. The diction " match" refers as the connoted meaning of a husband or a soul mate for Hilda to grow old with. To add, during the German concentration camps the Jews still praised God as they celebrated Rosh Hashanah despite the trouble they are

in “ Rosh Hashanah had dominated my life. I knew that my sins grieved the almighty and so I pleaded for forgiveness... I fully believed... salvation of the world depended on every one of my deeds, on every one of my prayers (Wiesel 68). The Jews still kept their belief in God despite the feeling of losing God. This quote shows indirect characterization as Elie even though prayed to God, tended to lose faith rebelling against praying to him and questioning why should he pray. This reveals the symbol Traditions = Chores/Mandatory. Religious Ceremonies The Jews undergo religious ceremonies before they were inserted into camps and while they were in camps. The Jews contemplated whether to continue their religious ceremonies, such as Yom Kippur, for the sake of their health and well-being. Yom Kippur was dedicated to fasting, honoring The Day of Atonement.

When the Jews were free it was alright to fast because it was for God and they had enough food that could last them the long days of fasting, but when they became captive Yom Kippur became a debate to whether proceed along with the fasting and starve themselves or not, “ To fast could mean a more certain, more rapid death (Wiesel 69)”. The Jews felt that completing Yom Kippur could endanger their lives. The dialogue clarifies that although fasting is the Jewish tradition, their life is worth more than worshipping to a God who “ chose to be silent (Wiesel 33)”.

Equally important, The Passover is the celebration of Jews for God that the Bible commands the Jew to complete. Although the Jews never participated in the Passover during their time in the concentration camps, they felt as if they were pretending to enjoy or celebrate and rejoice God. “ We wished the holiday would end so as not to have to pretend (Wiesel 10)”. The dialogue

suggests the Jews focus were not on worshipping God but what foreshadows. The motif's abstract meaning of religious ceremonies is the debate that Jews must take to whether the ceremonies would really benefit them or slowly push them towards their death.

The Passover and Yom Kippur conveys Faith as the Jews debate whether to complete the religious ceremony or die trying. Significance of the Opening Scene Elie's opening scene displayed memorable scenes. Elie began describing Moishe the Beadle and how his presence looked quite "awkward as a clown (Wiesel 13)". The diction "jack -of- all trades" shows the connoted meaning that he was in fact known around Sighet. Elie's opening scene displayed how the freedom of the Germans felt gratifying and memorable.

Elie recites how they lived in luxury, "The Jewish community held him (Shlomo) in highest esteem (Wiesel 4)" and how they worshipped God without it feeling as if it was mandatory or a chore, "we would read, over and over again, the same page of the Zohar. Not to learn it by heart but to discover within the very essence of divinity (Wiesel 5)." Elie's opening scene exploits the theme of loss of innocence. When the Germans disrupt the comfort and luxury of the Jews homes, "The time has come..... you must leave all this (Wiesel 16). Explain how the Germans immediately took control over the Jews, although aware it was going to happen. This significant event/scene shapes the overall plot in what foreshadow ahead as the Jews began to board a train that lead to "thick, dirty smoke (Wiesel 6)" and had the "smell of burning flesh (Wiesel 28)." Significance of Closing Scene The significance of the closing scene was the comment Elie made that reminded

him of his late father. Elie ended the scene with a comment of how his reflection reminded him of his lost father and how the image and the last words he has received from him will never be forgotten.

Elie missed his father deep inside as he looked in the mirror and saw “ a corpse was contemplating me (Wiesel 115). ” This quote explains the theme of survival as Elie realizes although his father is gone he will never forget his face and the last words that will haunt him forever. This shapes the overall plot and feeling of omission that Elie could not save his father for just another week until they were liberated. Wiesel’s Memoir Wiesel’s style made a more visual image displaying the morbid and cruel ways the Nazis treated the Jews.

Wiesel employs a first person point-of-view that enables the reader into the position and situation he endured through the silence the world kept from the Jews. How Wiesel employs his point-of-view effects the reader’s attention and interest. The reader begins to feel as if they are him and are experiencing this tragedy causing suspense in what will come next. Wiesel uses multiple metaphors and immense choice of words. During the concentration camp before being evacuated Elie was in an infirmary, for his foot had been affected by the cold weather.

Elie encountered a “ faceless neighbor (Wiesel80)” who gave up on his faith in God and stated, “ I have more faith in Hitler than in anyone else. He alone has kept his promise, all his promises, to the Jewish people (Wiesel 81)”. This statement states a metaphor, in which Elie uses quite often, to state that Hitler is God and that this sick man has completely lost faith in God. Also during the hanging of the young pipel who was hung for holding ammunition

was between life and death as he gasped for air ,” His tongue was still red, his eyes not yet extinguished (Wiesel 65)”.

The diction “ extinguished” gives credit to the fire that has not yet been exterminated resulting a denoted meaning of his body being a fire and his eyes have not yet been dismayed. Important Character #1: Shlomo (Elie’s Father) Shlomo played a significant role in Night. Sholomo was the reason Elie strived to stay alive. Elie felt as if “ I was his sole support (Wiesel87)”.

The direct characterization of Elie shows how caring and supportive he is of his father. Elie’s comment displays the role that he will support and care for his father’s health until the day he dies.

Elie’s father before captive was “ a cultured leader, rather unsentimental (Wiesel 4)”. Although Shlomo “ rarely displayed his feelings (Wiesel 4)” the moment he cried to Elie signified the breakdown that Shlomo had in the camp meant it was time for Elie to step up and become a man and support his father for he was becoming weak and ill. If Shlomo were to have not survived as long as he did Elie would have committed suicide and never to be able to tell the story of his dreadful nights in the German camps.

Important Character #2: Moishe the Beadle Moishe the Beadle was Elie’s mentor that was mentioned in the beginning of the novel.

Moishe was considered “ the poorest of the poor of Sighet (Wiesel 5)”. Moishe was quite awkward but had dreamy eyes that would be” gazing off into the distance (Wiesel 3)”. Elie’s novel, Night, provided indirect characterization of Moishe as he described Moishe heavenly, shy and religious. Moishe led Elie to understanding his religion. Moishe warned the Jews of the Nazis before they came to take all the Jews captive. Moishe’s

importance throughout the novel was foreshadowing the events that would soon lead to the deaths of many Jews. Moishe gave Elie the belief of God and why to pray and believe in God.

Moishe mentored Elie in entering eternity and finding God. Alternate Title #1 Unforgotten Deaths explain the overall reason to why Elie written Night. Elie stated in his speech how “ the world did know and remained silent (Wiesel 118)” of these tragic deaths of Jews they pleaded to forget. The constant blows, “ they began to strike at us left and right shouting (Wiesel 28)” were tormenting. The starvation and torture they hidden foreshadowed the deaths of Jews that the world kept silent about. The pure hatred the Nazis displayed upon the Jews, “ Faster, you tramps, you flea-ridden dogs! Wiesel 85)” were abusive and careless of how the Jews felt. The Germans were deceitful and tried to trick the Russians into thinking they were treating the Jews with respect, “ Let them know that here lived men and not pigs (Wiesel 84)”. This diction and syntax demonstrates the tone the Germans wanted to display to the Russians that they are quite caring of Jew although they burned them alive. Unforgotten Deaths is a fit title for this novel because of the reason Elie believes he survived “ nothing more than a chance (Wiesel viii)”. Alternate Title #2 The Loss of Faith and Jews through the silent death camps fit Night displaying how the Jews fought for life and death through the demolishments of their memory. The Jews were hanged and burned alive, “ You will burn! Burned to a cinder! Turned into ashes! (Wiesel 31) and “ the hangman put the rope around his neck (Wiesel 62)”. Through the multiple deaths the Jews encountered, the loss of faith increased. They began to question, “ For God’s sake, where is God? (Wiesel 65)” and when they felt as

if there was no God they then “ Have more faith in Hitler than in anyone else (Wiesel 81)”. The deaths in German were kept quiet and the Jews that were killed had lost faith in God.