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The Ethics of Elie Wiesel's Storytelling as a New Theoretical Approach in Representing the Holocaust

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Abstract

Grounded on Giorgio Agamben's assertion that once the historical, technical and legal context of the Jewish genocide has been sufficiently clarified, we are facing a serious challenge when we really seek to understand it and becomes more thought-provoking when we try to represent it. The difference between what we know about the Holocaust and how this delicate issue should be represented is facing major challenges in the context of content abundance on both Holocaust classical analyses or contemporary digital formats.

Contemporary society is facing ethical and emotional limitation regarding Holocaust representation. What is the right way to represent the Holocaust after eight decades since the Holocaust took place is one of the relevant questions that arises in this context? How to live, what to do, and how do the consequences of my actions affect society after the Holocaust experience, are some of the quests of Elie Wiesel's life. The paper will highlight how his storytelling provides some guidelines for shaping a possible good way of representing the Holocaust and what are its resources. It will also illustrate what are the ethical components of his storytelling that constitute an example of ethical conduct and give some relevant suggestions on how to instrument them in order to place Holocaust representation on a progressive way of reflection.

Keywords: *storytelling; Elie Wiesel; ethics; Holocaust; progressive learning;*

Introduction

If in the United States of America there is some fear that the memoirs, commemoration, historicization and musealization of the subject of the Holocaust will actually contribute to the inevitable erosion of the

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memory of the Holocaust (Rabinbach, 1997, p. 227) this paper argues that the ethical values contained in Elie Wiesel's storytelling can contribute on a universal level at the challenge of representing one of the most complex historical events in human history-the Holocaust.

Based on the observations of visitor behavior within the Elie Wiesel Museum from Sighet, Romania, a need for a new ethics on amending social action towards the topic of Holocaust, political violence and human rights has aroused.

Within the contextual applicability of the museum, taking into consideration the advanced ethical values contained in the topic of Holocaust and human rights, the paper will highlight the most relevant aspects of the ethics in Elie Wiesel's storytelling and give some recommendations on how to instrument his narrative, on a discursive congruence of disciplines such as literature, museology, communication and ethics. The article proposes Elie Wiesel's ethics of his storytelling as a relevant theory for improving the representation of the Holocaust as a new progressive approach.

Jewish Storytelling as a tool to world improvement

A story of a renown storyteller from the 18th century, Rabbi Nachman of Breslau begins like this:

Once upon a time there was a king who knew that the next harvest would be cursed. Whosoever would eat from it would go mad. And so he ordered an enormous granary to be built and he stored there all that remains from the last crop. He entrusted the key to his friend and this is what he told him: "When my subjects and their king have been struck with madness, you alone will have the right to enter the storehouse and eat uncontaminated food. Thus, you will escape the malediction. But in exchange, your mission will be to cover the earth, going from country to country, from town to town, from one street to the other, from one man to the other, telling tales, ours — and you will shout, you will shout with all your might: Good people, do not forget! What is at stake is your life, your survival! Do not forget, do not forget!" (Wiesel, 1972, p. 202)

As expected, the man's tale was disbelieved and he was dismissed as a madman. It is often the case of the Holocaust survivor, the position of the Holocaust witness when telling his survival tale.

This is indeed Elie Wiesel's position, a Holocaust witness, a survivor, and a storyteller. With characteristic modesty, Elie Wiesel always described himself as a simple storyteller. But we cannot disregard the numerous other ways in which he has been recognized. Biographers have held up Wiesel alongside the most prominent biblical characters; have credited him with the gifts of prophecy and divine science; and have called him the keeper of the secret of restoring of the human condition (Frunză, 2008).

Alongside with Nobel Peace Prize, Elie Wiesel's name is associated with the beginning of the narrative of suffering among the first writings about Holocaust experience. Placing him at the beginning of this initiative, promoted by the authoritative voice of François Mauriac, who signed the forward of the acclaimed autobiographical novel *Night*, Elie Wiesel becomes one of the vocal presences in using narrative as a form of active involvement towards indifference and Holocaust interpretation.

While storytelling is a fundamental human instinct and has been around nearly as long as humans have, the progressive ways of learning are advancing new means to power this old teaching technique. Storytelling becomes essential to learning about the Holocaust because it is effective.

Jonathan Gottschall, who wrote *The Storytelling Animal. How stories make us human* (Gottschall, 2013) an insightful unified theory of storytelling, argues that stories help us navigate life's complex problems and that storytelling actually contribute, as a behavior, to our wellbeing, ensuring survival, and changing the world for the better, working as a bridge between information and emotion.

Uri Hasson, a neuroscientist at Princeton University, performed research on the impact of storytelling and what he found was that, as his subjects listened to an engaging story, their brainwaves began to synchronize. Not only did the learners' brainwaves synchronize with each other, but they also synchronized with those of the storyteller. What this means is that when the brain sees or hears a story, its neurons fire in the same patterns as the speaker's brain producing what is known as *neural coupling* (Suzuki et al., 2018).

The vast world consumption of content makes it more evident than ever that sharing content proves to be an efficient and relevant way of communicating in an immersive, multisensory sometimes supersensory and participatory way.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblet's theory in *The concept and varieties of Narrative performance in Eastern European Jewish Culture* (1989) suggests that the narrative of Eastern European Jewish culture is an integral part of both the domestic and religious universes and that the storytelling skill is a cultural inclination.

In Jewish life, one of the basic, also dynamic forms of performance was storytelling. The Mishna, the oldest authoritative postbiblical collection and codification of Jewish oral laws highlights the paradigm of the Jewish way of telling a story-most of the times a story of hope, that begins with a bad end and finishes in redemption.

Yiddish folktales are often moralistic and have biblical origins most of the time. An occupational variant connected to storytelling is that of the *maggid*-who would typically travel around the *shtetls*, towns and cities of Eastern Europe, offering illuminating talks rooted in traditional sources. Usually, they were rabbis and they were paid for their services so this became some sort of profession. Elie Wiesel identified himself with this profession of *maggid* travelling from town to town from school to school talking to people questioning humans and their acts.

Proclaiming that his only experience in the secular world was Auschwitz, Elie Wiesel uses this formula as an exercise for identifying and manifesting Jewish identity on the one hand, on the other hand, as a confession of the experience of the Holocaust, engaged, conscious and challenging to the audience to which it is addressed.

The past 75 years after the Second World War made waves among various perspectives on the complex context of the Holocaust. One of the challenges that face contemporary generation and its specialists in the study of genocide, is how to include the consequences of the Holocaust into the ethical dimension of social design of communities around the world in order to prevent reinterpretations and reenactments of such atrocities.

As we move further from the event of the Jewish Genocide and Holocaust survivors are less and less available for enhancing the learning of the Holocaust experience, new means of progressive learning have been introduced in Holocaust educational programs.

The Progressive way

Constructivist theory emphasizes that in teaching and learning, attention must be on the learner, not on what is to be learned, and teaching should respond to learner's dispositions and moods and maximize their learning potential. The Constructivist theory admits that information as knowledge is created in the mind of the learner using personal learning methods (Hein, 1995).

The integrated combination of experiential learning and the political purpose of social justice with socio-political commitment to promoting democratic practices is evident in almost any of the educational movements

classified as progressive. The progressive way of representing the Holocaust should create sources of reflection and debate.

Representation of the Holocaust has been developed in various ways, from testimony to memorials, story-sharing platforms, or classical museum exhibitions. It appears to be a particular fact that the representation of the Holocaust is by no means neither a rigid nor an easy one. It needs a coalition of interdisciplinary approaches to succeed in generating the relevant response from the public.

Facing the generous amount of content on the topic in classical forms or new digital offers, based also on the uncontrollable effects on the public one must turn on a safe universal method when trying to represent the Holocaust.

Both the initiated public or the uninitiated are not prepared for the paradoxical dimension of the representation of the Holocaust: the imperatives of silence and the filling of its void with testimony, the loss of ethical consciousness to survival instincts (Lassner, 2007, p. 115).

The interpretation of the Holocaust requests a high level of accuracy of facts and notions and a deep reflective dimension. Nevertheless, following the observations of visitor's behavior in the Elie Wiesel Museum from Sighet, Romania, a new need for amending social action towards the Holocaust has aroused. Knowing the facts and context and reflecting more or less actively on the topic appears to create a short-term reaction. A new means of introducing the public on the topic has been shaped during the past few years.

The story-sharing website for amateur and professional writers Wattpad offers over a thousand stories about the Holocaust all build over the same patterns of a standard story most of which are romances revolving around the same plot, the impossible love of a Jewish woman and a Nazi man (Benzaquen-Gautier, 2018). Even if awareness of the Holocaust-an important issue to be taken into consideration, would be among the positive aspects of this type of narrative, the issue must be carefully handled when referring to the ethical dimension of Holocaust representation.

What is considered to be the ``bad writing`` as Berel Lang affirms (Lang, 2003), this sentimental and cliché type of literature, at the limits of ``comfortable Holocaust`` as Saul Friedlander (2000) formulates it, and “fun fiction”, makes more clear the importance of Elie Wiesel's use of his storytelling ethics in representing the Holocaust.

The ethical dimension of Elie Wiesel's storytelling

True writers want to tell the story simply because they believe they can do something with it — their lives are not fruitless and are not spent in vain. True listeners want to listen to stories to enrich their own lives and to understand them. What is happening to me happens to you. Both the listener and the reader are participants in the same story and both make it the story it is. (Cargas, 1992, p. 86)

Wiesel has the remarkable ability to elevate storytelling to an ethical level. For him storytelling is a form of activism (Horowitz, 2006, p. 3) by letting his whole life experience be consumed, transforming it into a story that can be instrumented by the audience using deep resonance and promoting a standard of conduct. Elie Wiesel's storytelling can provide an authentic platform, as a space of mediation between the past and the present old and new with the voice of authority and the responsibility of shaping social thinking and behavior, a cognitive and emotional engagement that leads to profound, relevant experiences.

The storytelling contributes toward a unique embodied experience for the general public to support the process of “self-learning “ as well as interpreting and mediating memory (Lu, 2017, p. 443). The ethics of Wiesel's storytelling addresses the consecrated issues such as distortion, travestying, denial, glosses of sentimentalism, sensationalism and so on. As a storyteller, Wiesel tells stories about people, about the meaning of life, about radical evil, about survival, and about joy and blessing exploring the inexpressible (Frunză, 2008). Using Elie Wiesel's narrative as representation of Holocaust can be grounded on Elie Wiesel's stature of his stories that constitutes both a testimony and also an emotive narrative force filling an emotional gap between the narrator and the public.

Expanding Paul Eisenstein idea that Night, Elie Wiesel's first narrative of personal Holocaust experience, ethically provokes critical thinkers, Elie Wiesel's storytelling, by questioning the unshakable truths of the reader as a public often animate or sanction the commission of violence, underwriting in the process an understanding of history and experience as essentially progressive and redemptive (Eisenstein, 2007, p. 114).

The general, official perspective on Holocaust and its representation is without doubt incomplete without the expressions of the personal experiences which on the new progressive way of learning weight more than intellectual approaches in the process of creation of collective memory and Holocaust culture. Though historians have mistrusted personal narratives as reliable documents, in recent years they discuss how autobiographical

narrative may contribute to understanding both the past and the process of accessing it (Aurell & Davis, 2019). The autobiographies from the field of history complement other forms of representation of the past produced by literary scholars or novelists. Elie Wiesel's narrative and stories serve on denouncing political violence, indifference of the standbys, collapse of morality and ethical values as cultural products of memory.

Bringing back an event transcending the noise of contemporaneity and captivating not only human attention but also complete resonance with a topic that is controversial and also very exposed, requires a powerful skill and an ability to use sometimes unconventional or out of the path means to achieve the results. Elie Wiesel has the ability to do that and he always focuses on human connection, giving it a universal dimension in time and space. Using various historical time zones-biblical times, Middle Ages, modernity, war time, contemporaneity-his stories build familiarity, conveying various cultures and values of the society. The relevance of his storytelling is given by the stories that speak of different stages of human condition and life situations that are relevant to contemporary psychological and sociological contexts.

Wiesel has performed an ethics of kindness and sensitivity towards humanity, a humanistic ethics situating fellow humans as the most important element to be taken into consideration when taking decisions and /or dealing with moral dilemmas. Following the traditional line of preserving the commandments and the mitzvot, as a consistent part of the Jewish ethics, all of Wiesel's acts, facts and stories are filtered by the ethical dimension of his Jewish identity. Beyond this dimension of resonance with identity-self-identity and otherness, the stories may open for the public several layers of representation that Holocaust needs to be based on before making a sense: historical and social contexts, the maieutic, the matter of answers and questions, the matter of theodicy, belief and so on.

Roles and functions of Elie Wiesel's storytelling

One of the roles of the storytelling – that of inspiration and creativity is fully entering its rights in such context. Elie Wiesel uses multiple sources to get to various audiences both Jewish and non-Jewish. His opening to the Christian public was one of the reasons his discourse became so known and so popular in the 1970's. He renews the Jewish public and harmoniously integrates, bringing closer the non-Jewish public by engaging in various acts and conversations with his fellow non-Jewish intellectuals. Using storytelling, on Jewish topics, can considerably help the

audience engage to the Judaic universe and get them closer to the intimacy of the Jewish culture. One of the basic rules in teaching the Holocaust or representing it, is to connect it to the richness of the Jewish culture. It is only once the public know about the complex dimension of Judaism that they can relate to the loss of it in the context of the Second World War.

When using Elie Wiesel 's storytelling one should take into consideration sounds, language, rhetorical strategies, dimension of the passages of text, addressability, that create a collaborative context from negotiation to a critical confrontation of sense and meaning and brings the storytelling to an experiential dimension. A complex setting that elevates the public to a different level of acknowledgement and experience. The sources of his methods are based in biblical texts, Midrash, Talmud, Aggadah, Hasidic tales, Jewish oral tradition, Yiddish literature and world literature. His storytelling includes reflections from classical philosophers or existentialists, classical literature from the biblical text to Upanishads, the Vedas, Gilgamesh epopee, he often invokes Camus, Sartre, Flaubert, Malraux, Mauriac, Paul Valery, building a cryptic poetics through Hasidic allegory by referring to famous rabbis, making analogies with biblical contexts. Wiesel creates a combination between the French humanism, that marked his intellectual formation and the cabbalistic mystique. He has favorite biblical characters like Isaak, Job, favorite rabbis – Rabbi of Kotzk, Rabbi Nahman of Breslau or Baal Shem Tov. Wiesel begins from a particular and individual level to quest a partial clarity of human condition so that to open a more general yet specific space to possible conclusions based on empathetic connection between the listeners, characters and the events.

My father, wrote Elie Wiesel, an enlightened spirit, believed in man. My Grandfather, a fervent Hasid, believed in God. The one taught me to speak, the other to sing. Both loved stories. And when I tell mine, I hear their voices. Whispering from beyond the silenced storm, they are what links the survivor to their memory. The one who believes in God tells him the stories. The other, who does not believe, must tell the stories to his children, to mankind and to himself. (Wiesel, 1972, p. 1)

Using characters, sometimes just as metonyms for himself Elie Wiesel's stories offer a wide range of addressability to the public. Each of the categories included in his narrative find correspondence in humans in general and they can resonate and deeply immerse, even if only in the imaginative manner. Elie Wiesel characters can function as guides introducing the public into completely new territories in a personal and intimate way, introducing the most actual political and social problematics. They introduce the public into the Jewish mysticism, the peaceful shabbat dinners, the happiness of summer holidays into the Carpathian Mountains, the domestical and intimate struggles of a community with its own good and

bad so that to take them into the void of the death in the darkest place associated to the Second World War – Auschwitz.

On a different level a theoretical approach through a profound analytical inquiry may reveal a critical introspection of the self in regard to family members and to divinity as a controversial relationship, all these defining the self as a personal cultural heritage through a process of deep reflection, an emotional endeavor to reconcile fragments of its own identity.

Elie Wiesel's stories are full of themes and repetitive images that can be intercalated in the representation of both the Jewish life before the war, be that theological, religious, traditional, and the contemporary Jewish identity, creating a narrative strategy that keeps the public culturally alert. His means of communicating are sometimes at the edge of absurdity-laughter, silence, constant contradiction, paradox all in designed as mythopoetic context.

The brevity of Wiesel's storytelling along a historical accurate chronological timeline helps in creating a reliable and immediate contact with the public. The shattering content of his narrative is presented with such clarity that the reader is not flooded with too much information and it is thus allowed to become unsettled only by the emotional impact of the narrated events. Wiesel's great artistic achievement consists in the transformation of an overwhelming inexpressible, unexplainable and highly irrational experience into a graspable linear and smooth story. Yet Wiesel's storytelling is neither simple nor simplifying but tremendously sophisticated (Klingenstein, 2007, p. 76).

Wiesel's storytelling invites readers to share his questions but the questions his story provoke do not produce indifference and despair. Instead, they lead to more stories and to further questions that encourages protest against those conditions (Roth, 2007).

Elie Wiesel uses question as a form of problematization, an extension of a Jewish tradition regarding questions. There is a story referring to a mother who is asking her son, a yeshiva bocher (student) not what valuable he had learned during the day but if he had asked a good question. Wiesel positions himself in regard to this matter in a continuous effort to advance the same perennial questions of the child, the teenager, the victim, the survivor without necessarily expecting the answer. The process is a constant trying of growing up, learning how to navigate through life as adult after the death of all the values and beliefs he had built before the war as a child. It is one of the heuristic models used to identify himself first and then to understand the others and their actions. Wiesel prefers questions to answers. Question, which contains the word quest, brings people together and keeps dialogue alive (Berger, 2007, p. 48). Quest becomes one of Elie

Wiesel's favorite concepts. His storytelling transcends this broad concept and directs it into the relevant dimension of understanding. The quest for understanding remains one of the most recognizable missions of his storytelling. Wiesel's storytelling invites readers to share his questions but the questions his story provoke do not produce indifference and despair. Instead, they lead to more stories and to further questions that encourages protest against those conditions (Roth, 2007).

Wiesel frequently refers to himself in the third person as a teller of tales. But his passion is equally theological. Storytelling in the Jewish tradition is a significant way of engaging theological issues. Biblical thought, midrash (rabbinic commentary), and Hasidic stories all convey Jewish Theology. Thus, when one scholar calls Wiesel the most important storyteller of the twentieth century (Rubenstein, 2009), he means that the Nobel laureate is a formidable theologian who as a teller of tales, can raise and reraise fundamental questions about the Holocaust, humanity and God. Elie Wiesel becomes an eloquent witness of the tension of the relationship between him and divinity, between the believer that he was and the survivor that he is (was), participating to a Jewish storytelling tradition in the divine mode: God is the author of creation, and the storyteller mirrors his activity (Horowitz, 2006, p. 11).

Old tradition new functions-using Hassidic wisdom to generate resonance for Holocaust understanding

When talking about Elie Wiesel's story telling we speak about the relevance of its function. The basic of Elie Wiesel's storytelling is transmission of culture and spirituality. When speaking and /or teaching about the holocaust the first condition is to make sure that elements of the Jewish culture are outlined. Identified with the maggid Wiesel identifies himself with the context of the spiritual movement of Hasidism that emerged in the 18th century, with a tzaddik. The tzaddik was a spiritual leader that was the mediator between Man and God and his life was considered to be a living expression of the Torah hence his behavior became one of the major focuses of their followers sometimes more important than their doctrines. There is this anecdotic tale about a rabbi-Rabbi Leib, a disciple of Dov Baer of Mezherich (also called the Great Maggid, the successor of Baal Shem Tov-the founder of the Hasidic movement) was said to have visited his master not to hear explanations of the Torah but to see how Dov Baer laced and unlaced his shoes.

The Hasidism contribution to the Jewish identity was attitudinal and experiential rather than theoretical-an element that can be used in representing the Holocaust, creating experience and or invoking social participation while learning about the Holocaust. The power of Hasidic stories emerges from this experiential dimension.

Hasidic wisdom is best encapsulated in the Hasidic tales and stories. The Hasidic tale carried in one's heart functions by itself as a kind of teacher or mentor. To possess a fund of tales is to cultivate an inner voice providing perspective, poise, dignity, self-confidence, and grounding, a reservoir that can point to a new purchase on circumstances and assist in proceeding with wisdom and integrity (Polen, 2007, p. 27).

Hasidism as a form of performative manifestation of spiritual belief and practice elevated storytelling to the level of religious practice in the absence or limitation of the study of Torah as was the case of many communities from culturally and geographically isolated shtetls in the mountains of Eastern Europe. As a neo-Hasid, Elie Wiesel considerably contributes to the renewal of Judaism through his storytelling especially in the context of the American Jewish community. In *Storytelling and Spirituality in Judaism*, Itzhak Buxbaum, one of the most active present-day storytellers, considers that the spiritual nature of the Jewish storytelling may have a growing impact on the American Jewry regarding the interest towards the religious life (Buxbaum, 1994) thus a new function of storytelling emerges-renewal of Judaism within the Jewish community.

As a representant of the modern Jewish storytelling Elie Wiesel may be submitted to David Roskie's point of view that modern Jewish storytelling merged from a void within the traditional life adapting the folk stories and advancing them into a religious practice most of the times as a surrogate of faith and belief (Roskies, 1994).

Other functions of Wiesel's storytelling have been identified: the functions of standing as a witness through his storytelling, to be a voice in a void, to transmit the Jewish heritage, to make the autobiographical experience available to the public, to confront divinity and to reach humans through his sensitivity. All these are defining Wiesel as a storyteller and witness to the Jewish past and traditions in course of loss, a prophet in the post Holocaust reality, and as a optimistic encourager of the readers (Lambert, 2006). Building on that the inspirational function through the characters and the optimism of Wiesel stands out. The listeners of his stories and the means of communicating them are inspired by the emblematic figures used by Wiesel. Their actions, deeds and experiences bring a positive change to themselves and the people around them.

Healing through stories, as a function of storytelling function has as main objective mending communication lines between humans and humans and between humans and God in the unfortunate context of interrupted religious norms or failure of their meaning and functionality (Bussie, 2006, p. 127).

The storytelling becomes the perfect resource when the standard theoretical frames are void of content and meaning. When the hypotheses of an answer collapse or the answer cannot be outlined in complex issues like the Holocaust or something more general Death, God, Evil, Meaning, or notions to which conclusions cannot be drawn, the only way of communication in this context is storytelling (Bussie, 2006, p. 129). This is a method borrowed by Wiesel from one of his favorite rabbis himself a renowned storyteller - Rabi Nachman of Breslau that was renowned by his abrupt interruptions in the middle of a story just to point out that there was no possible answer, end or resolution.

Conclusions

We have little reason to believe that we are ethically superior to the Europeans of the 1930s and 40s, and therefore less vulnerable to the kind of ideas that Hitler proclaimed and put so successfully into practice. If we really want to be like the rescuers, we need to build from now on the structures that give us more chances to behave like this. For salvation, in this broad sense of it, a firm understanding of the ideas that shook conventional policies and paved the way for an out-of-precedent crime is needed (Snyder, 2018).

All the survivors including big names like Primo Levi, Agamben having Wiesel at the peak in their trying to represent the unconceivable, they all invite us through their own means to take a break and listen to their story. Listening to stories allow the audience to step back and reflect on Levi's "gray zone" (Levi, 2003) or on Lawrence Langer "choiceless choice" (Langer, 1988). Elie Wiesel likewise using stories invites us to enter a universe of loss and life at the same time, as contradictory as this may sound.

Transforming some of the most controversial dialogues with himself into forms of analysis and reflections on human condition helps Wiesel set parameters of understanding, reporting and solving problems both personal, social and political. His questions, anonymous or personal, that arise from his self-reflections related to various states of the human condition or even the divine condition, the permanent dialogue with himself, generates a set of

moral commitments that give Wiesel's writing a special relevance and recommend it as a standard of ethics conduct and action.

The complex process of Elie Wiesel's storytelling engages to observations, reflections, reasoning and communicating as a guide to act but not before critically thinking, a fundament for human agency and ethical commitment. The process of self-reflection is a constant feature of Wiesel's storytelling as a referential method in which the public builds from what is said to what this means in which the implications give shape to the meaning through the ethical process of becoming through virtue of integrity that generates duty and utility.

Outlining the main functions and roles of Elie Wiesel's storytelling and its ethical components, debated by scholars around the world, the paper argues that the retrieval and use of data results from the analyses of the literature on the topic, is important through the corpus of data and information. The use of Hasidic stories, characters, personal experiences and the ethical debates found in Wiesel's narrative are useful tools in elaborating new approaches on representing Jewish culture and the Holocaust both on the narrative level and also within an institutional context such as the schools, museums, organizations. On a practical level instrumenting elements of Wiesel's stories proves to be of utmost resonance for the public and can be used on a more general level for elaborating museum scenography directions, exhibitions, workshops and educational programs on Jewish life, Holocaust and human rights.

One day a Tzadik came to Sodom; He knew what Sodom was, so he came to save it from sin, from destruction. He preached to the people. "Please do not be murderers, do not be thieves. Do not be silent and do not be indifferent." He went on preaching day after day, maybe even picketing. But no one listened. He was not discouraged. He went on preaching for years. Finally, someone asked him, "Rabbi, why do you do that? Don't you see it is no use?" He said, "I know it is of no use, but I must. And I will tell you why: in the beginning I thought I had to protest and to shout in order to change them. I have given up this hope. Now I know I must picket and scream and shout so that they should not change me."

Following the outlines of the above story, Elie Wiesel's trying to reconcile the events begins from the feeling that the stories were told out loud from the aggressor perspective hence his engagement to tell the story on behalf of those who were no longer able to tell their story-the victims. Part of this unique community of survivors he acts consequently having a parallel mission to diminish world suffering and to contribute to the optimization of humanity by telling The Tale.

As Benjamin Lee Worf argued (cit in. Trager et al., 1957) our attitude towards a subject depends on how it is described. Elie Wiesel's perspective on genocide and its representations through storytelling - linguistic content, political beliefs contained in his language, the poetry and sensitivity of his message, become under the pressure of consciousness and implicit responsibilities, validated sources and normative frameworks of ethical conduct of a democratic society.

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