



Reading Elie Wiesel's *Night*: From Trauma, Anger, Remembrance to Hope

"Because I remember, I despair. Because I remember, I have the duty to reject despair."

"To be a Jew means not to despair, even when it seems justified."

1. Surviving survival. Choices. *And the World Was Silent*.
2. *Night* is the beginning of his journey. A constructed memoir facing trauma and protecting some privacy.
3. How do you encounter Auschwitz? How do you encounter *Night*?
 - Make room for the other
 - Respectfully make room for mourning
 - Recognize the distance
 - Leave a *matzeva*
4. Why read *Night*?
 - How do we hold traumatic memory?
 - How do we "witness" someone else's trauma?
 - How will it make me a better person?
5. Hasidism was founded by Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer (d. 1760) the Baal Shem Tov. In Sighet:
 - An awareness of God's presence
 - A joyful, robust embrace of God's world
 - Embracing the uniqueness of the individual and of diversity
 - Parents treated with reverence
 - Children cherished as God's blessing
 - Traditional way of learning is through song(To fence with the shadows, but always have the song.)
6. 1940: Sighet becomes part of Hungary with Admiral Miklós Horthy's collaboration with Hitler.
7. Adolf Eichmann was in charge of Hungarian deportations.
8. Nazis arrive in Sighet in March 1944. 437,000 Jews were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau from May 15 to July 9, 1944.
9. *Night* wrestles with.
 - Survival guilt inflicted by the perpetrator.
 - Jewish identity. Passover Haggadah.
 - The paradoxes of Planet Auschwitz. "Fire cannot be destroyed by fire."
 - Ten years of silence.
10. How to read *Night*.
 - The limits and inadequacy of words.
 - How to tell his/their story without being a perpetrator?
 - How to add the silence?
 - How to keep some of his life private