

FROM NIGHT TO DAWN: UNVEILING THE DEPTHS OF DEPRESSION**PRESENTED BY ELIE WIESEL****Shohista Muxamedova Umidjon qizi**

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Abstract: The article that delves into the exploration and portrayal of depression in the works of renowned author Elie Wiesel, specifically focusing on his work *Dawn*.

It delves into an analysis of novel examining the haunting portrayal of depression through the eyes of the protagonist. Moreover, it explores how the author artfully conveys the depths of despair, hopelessness, and psychological anguish experienced by both himself and fellow prisoners during their time in concentration camps. The article touches the themes of loss, existential crisis, survivor's guilt, and the erosion of faith as a result of the Holocaust. It examines how Wiesel's vivid and evocative prose captures the emotional turmoil and mental anguish endured by individuals trapped in the horrors of the Holocaust.

Key words: Holocaust, depression, loss, survivors, self-guiltiness, internal struggle, past.

Holocaust fiction refers to works of literature that are centered around the Holocaust, the genocide of six million Jews and millions of others during World War II by Nazi Germany. Holocaust fiction uses narrative techniques to explore the experiences, trauma, and moral dilemmas faced by individuals affected by the Holocaust. One of the primary goals of Holocaust fiction is to bear witness to the atrocities and honor the memory of the victims. These works often convey the

immense suffering, dehumanization, and loss experienced by those who lived through the Holocaust. They provide a means for readers to empathize with the victims, survivors, and their stories, shedding light on the profound impact of this historical event. Holocaust fiction can take various forms, including novels, short stories, and plays. Many renowned authors have contributed significant works to this genre. Examples include *Night, Dawn, Day* by Elie Wiesel, *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, and *Sophie's Choice* by William Styron, *Schindler's List* by Thomas Keneally, and *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne and many others works by authors around the world.

These type of works explore themes such as identity, memory, guilt, survival, and the limits of humanity. Holocaust fiction often grapples with ethical dilemmas, such as the responsibilities of individuals in the face of genocide and the moral complexities of decision-making in extreme circumstances. [7] By engaging with Holocaust fiction, readers gain a deeper understanding of the historical context, the horrors of the Holocaust, and the resilience and courage of those affected by it. These works serve as reminders of the importance of remembering and learning from the past, and they contribute to ongoing discussions about the consequences of prejudice, hatred, and the dangers of unchecked power.

The lasting impact of Wiesel's portrayal of depression on readers, highlighting the empathetic connection between witnesses and readers foster understanding the tortures, and pain they went through. Furthermore, Wiesel also contributes the broader influence on raising awareness about Holocaust trauma and on addressing depression within the larger discourse of human suffering.

Dawn is a novel written by Elie Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate. It was first published in 1961 and is the second book in Wiesel's trilogy, which includes *Night* and *Day*. *Dawn* follows the story of Elisha, a Holocaust survivor who has joined a Jewish underground movement in British Mandate

Palestine after World War II. [4] The novel is set during the period leading up to the establishment of the State of Israel. Elisha is assigned the task of executing a British officer named John Dawson, in retaliation for the execution of a Jewish fighter by the British forces. The story primarily unfolds during the night before the scheduled execution, as Elisha grapples with his moral dilemma and confronts his own personal demons.

Initially, Elisha struggles with his duty to kill the seemingly innocent man. He is compelled to kill the captain Dawson because he is an Englishman, as Nazi Germans exterminate just being a Jew, he says “*Hate- like faith or love or war-justified everything.*” [9;72] This thought could not save Elisha from becoming an assassin. The Jews had been through so much and none of the agony of abhorrence, or war was ending. When Elisha did pull the trigger and kill he too had been killed inside. “*The shot had left me deaf and dumb. That’s it, I said to myself. It’s done. I’ve killed. I’ve killed Elisha.*” [9;78] When Elisha said that he killed himself he meant that he killed the last thing in him. Wiesel’s theme was that Elisha took his own dignity, which was all that he had left and killed it as he pulled the trigger. When Elisha shot that gun, he said his farewell to all that had happened to him. He lost all faith and thought, he could not make it any further, that the way he killed John Dawson. Secondly, Wiesel concentrated on the theme of **present** which **juxtaposes to the past**. Elisha was not wanting to face the present even though the present could have been the better times in Elisha’s life but by not realizing this Elisha only thinks of the past. In the past, the Jews have been held in concentration camps and now that the war has ended, the Jews are trying to regain their rights. The Jews go from one end of the spectrum to the complete opposite end before and after the World War II. He remembers Buchenwald, where his family died. According to Robert Alter, an American professor of Hebrew, *for Elisha the world seems to contain only three classes of people, each with its own kind of guilt of complicity: executioners, victims, and spectators at the execution.*

[6;165] This brought forth the future that was coming faster than Elisha wanted. For all of his life he had been the victim and it was something that he began to get used to. He was now going to be an executioner and it was a fate that he did not want to accept.

Although Elisha did kill a man, he killed for the good of the Jews. Elisha had been killed so much inside of himself that he struggled to do the same to another human. Elisha did not want to like John Dawson and wanted to kill him for hate. Thirdly and the last theme we wanted to identify is *internal struggle* which causes depression of the protagonist. In war, death surrounds everyone, there is no escaping it. Elisha and the movement’s objective was to, “...kill the greatest number of soldiers possible. It was that simple.” [9;20]. The death of John Dawson and David B. Moshe played a significant role in the writing of *Dawn*. Internal struggle is seen many times during the story. Elisha, being the main character of the book, has the most internal struggle of anyone. He always hears a child crying, even though no one is actually crying. This suggests that Elisha is that child who wants to cry but cannot. Elisha is given the job of executing debates whether he should get to know him before killing him. Gad tells Elisha, “Don’t torture yourself, this is war.” [9;25]. This quote implies that Elisha is making his task more of an issue than it’s supposed to be, according to Gad. Furthermore, Wiesel stated that a revenge is not the answer to the pain. This was proven by showing how Elisha’s actions after the Holocaust only made more confusion and hurt for himself. It is a strange truth we are made to feel almost everywhere in Wiesel’s fiction of ultimate confrontations.

The novel delves into themes of justice, revenge, guilt, and the moral complexities of violence. It raises profound questions about the nature of humanity, the consequences of war and hatred, and the search for meaning in the aftermath of immense suffering.

Wiesel's writing in *Dawn* is characterized by his powerful and introspective prose, drawing from his personal experiences as a Holocaust survivor. [5] The narrative reflects his exploration of the ethical and philosophical challenges faced by individuals who have endured trauma and the weighty decisions they must confront.

Overall, *Dawn* is a thought-provoking and emotionally charged work that delves into the moral and psychological dimensions of post-Holocaust existence. It showcases Wiesel's ability to navigate complex themes and elicit deep reflection on the human condition in the wake of immense tragedy.

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