



ELIE WIESEL

“You



shall choose life!”

Elie Wiesel left us on July 2, 2016.

He died in New York where he lived. He was 87 years old. Among his many responsibilities, he accepted to become the Honorary Founding President of our Galien Foundation and he was with us each year to personally give the Pro Bono Humanum Award, which clearly demonstrates the support and interest that he gave to our efforts and, beyond our institution, what he brought to all those who toil to ease Humanity’s physical and moral suffering.

He long understood that researchers were not given their deserved recognition. He lamented this lack of gratitude from those who, each day, benefit from the discoveries that occur as the result of unrelenting labor and immense talent.

What was a philosopher doing within this scientific milieu? The question of the legitimacy of Elie Wiesel’s presence does not, of course, present itself. In his indefatigable quest towards a better Humanity, peaceful and without suffering, he knew, better than anyone, science’s ethical dimension and its moral exigence. He felt this during the concentration camp experience in the prime of his youth, when he saw the results, in Auschwitz or Buchenwald, of the work of the depraved physicians to whom the Nazi regime gave its perverse and inhumane approval.

“Science without conscience is the death of the soul”: the death of his father, before his eyes, from dysentery, without any sort of medical assistance, at the end of a struggle from complete and utter exhaustion, gave this tortured adolescent a heightened awareness of the suffering that strikes man when he loses sight of both morality and compassion. Everything that Elie Wiesel did, along his long life, all his actions, his engagements, his creations, came from this very second where life escaped the carnal incarnation of his father, while his mother and one of his sisters had already died in camp.

“I put before you life and death, and you shall choose life,” says a verse from Deuteronomy. And this is exactly what happened. An incredibly strong life force permitted Elie Wiesel to continue. To live, to have projects and to imagine a foreseeable future, one needs to build hope. Elie Wiesel’s interest in research in the pharmaceutical and medical fields

“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.”

- Elie Wiesel





We now have to live without him and instead live “according to Elie Wiesel”... How will we manage this?

was the manifestation of his hope for a better world. He recognized the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries as powerful and incontestable instruments for progress, in the most noble sense of the word.

The final month of his life, as the painful progression of disease left little doubt as to the ultimate outcome - despite the valiant efforts by his physicians, he experienced in his own body the very real debate between the remaining quantity of his life versus its quality. This is a painful debate for all those involved at such moments. Those moments at the end of a life, that are so human, and so painful for those who are departing but also for the physician at the heart of this singular group, as well as for the friends and family.

What did Elie Wiesel feel at the very moment of his departure? No one can know. What is left of such a life at its last instant? His faith was deep, this is all we can know. His memoirs have helped, since the 1950's, to engrave into the memory of many nations, who are often so prompt at forgetting, the millions of souls assassinated by Nazi barbarism.

Most importantly we must first ensure that the Elie Wiesel Foundation continues. This foundation was established in 1986 with the partnership of Marion Wiesel, his wife, shortly after he was awarded with the Nobel Peace prize. The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity has worked over three decades to assure that the Holocaust is never forgotten, and has fought indifference, intolerance and injustice, in particular via the organization of opportunities for international dialogue and youth awareness programs. The foundation will now be directed by Marion and their son, Elisha. Let us confirm our support for their efforts.

Let us treasure what are for us, at this moment, precious tools which he left in order for us to be able to continue

on a path that respects the values that he believed and by which he lived.

In the true words of the President of the United States, Barack Obama, referring to Elie Wiesel as “one of the great moral voices of our time, and in many ways, the conscience of the world,” we are shown what type of ethical and philosophical stature will always represent this exceptional man and what his memory requires of us, both with regard to thought and action.

His existence, which developed amid the greatest depths of hell that man is capable of inflicting on his fellow man, and extended to the faith that man could use his intelligence for the good of all humanity, will remain a light, an example, a reference, a source of life... And you shall choose life!

Thank you Elie. For the past that we have shared and for the future in which you will remain so present!

