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**Shades of White in Search for Identity in American-Jewish
Literature**
*Abraham Cahan The Rise of David Levinsky and "Yeki, a Tale of
New York Ghetto"*

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DEDICATION

*We dedicate this dissertation to our families, and friends and above all our loving parents, whom they shared us unconditional care and affection to feel motivated during this process, and whom they helped us along the path of hard times, especially this marvelous adventure.

* *“Always make total efforts even when the odds are against you”* Arnold Palmer.

Great part of gratitude goes to us, for the harmony we shared, our team work and a persistent inspiration to make this work a reality.

“Belive it, acheiev it!”

** A massive part of gratitude goes to my precious cousin **Abdelhak**, whose encouragement made me able to be a believer and above all a day dreamer. whom he never gave up on me when once hope was an illusion to me, and whom he pushed me moving forward showing me that the end was never an option. *my deepest sense of thanks to you my dearest brother!*

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** Cordially, for my parents, my little brother and my twin for always being so supportive, for your help and for the love you always showed"*

Khadidja

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“Self-belief and hard work will always earn you success”

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Abstract

This research investigates the concept of acculturation and the psychological crisis in terms of forming identity and selfhood. These concepts have contributed in affecting and shaping Jewish literature during late 19th and 20th century and how American-Jewish literature have seen changes in style and writings during this period. Hence, this dissertation focused on the Jewish Diaspora as the chosen ethnic group to shed light on in the analysis of the chosen novels which had led to psychological conflicts to form an ambivalent psyche and character along with the suitable environment and surroundings they lived in, thus, this study offers a wide understanding of Abraham Cahan definition of the processes that affected identity in forming the new self in a new environment. It also introduced historical events of the Jewish history in Europe as well as the massive Jewish movement to America. The psychological, social; and historical features helped to get a clear look on how ideology is framed and influenced by several factors in Abraham Cahan novels. Thus, the study contributes to portray the struggle of minorities in striving to earn recognition and getting rid of alienation and inferiority in America. the construction of identity is the center and main theme in any immigrant writings and in ethnical literature as well as culture. The influential figure and the center of this thesis Abraham Cahan dealt with minority issues in forming a stable personality. We investigated his life between “now” and “then” we also clarified how the struggle of recognition led him to be a great figure for the coming generations.

Key words: Abraham Cahan, Identity, Acculturation, Religion, Secularism, Politics, Jewish attitude, Jewishness, Judaism, *secular Jew*

Table of contents

Dedication.....	I	
Acknowledgement	II	
Abstract	III	
Table f content.....	IV	
General introduction.....	p 01	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>Chapter one : Theoretical Foundations</u></i>		
Introduction	p10	
I. The Representation of Minority in the American Society		
1. Historical overview of Jewish immigration.....	p11	
2. The holocaust as a part of Jewish history.....	p 18	
II. Representation of Jewish-American literature.....		p 19
1. Influential Jewish-American writers.....	p 21	
III. Abraham Cahan(1860-1951) Religion, Ideology.....		P 23
IV. Selfness, identity formation.....		p 26
V. Conclusion.....		p 27
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Second Chapter: The Jewish Identity Under the Tide of Secularism</i>		
Introduction.....	p 29	
I. Conception of Jewishness, Judaism and secularism		
1. What is Judaism.....	p 29	
2. Jewishness.....	p 30	
3. The Jewish identity.....	p 31	

4. Secularism.....	p 32
5. Secular Jew.....	p 34
II. Segregation of Jews in America	
1. The process of acculturation.....	p 35
2. Anti-Semitism.....	P 35
3. How did Jews become white folks?.....	P 36
III. The tonal shifts in David/Cahan’s ideology and religion throughout the process of acculturation	
1. Between a “fine Jew” and a “secular Jew”	p 39
2. Between communism and capitalism.....	P 45
IV. The intra-psychic use of Jewish identity in the avenue of David:	
1. Significance of the name David in “the rise of David Levinsky”	P 46
2. Cultural practices and hereditary behavior.....	P 52
3. Conclusion.....	P 53
• <i>Third chapter: the Jewish Diaspora and the perception of the American dream</i>	
Introduction.....	p55
The American Dream/ Diaspora.....	P 55
Parasite, parasitic jew.....	P 65
General conclusion.....	P 70
Bibliography.....	P 74
ملخص.....	P77

General introduction

Since the notion of identity is a belief and attitudes held by a person or ethnic groups, it is a common notion to all for defining oneself against the other ethnic group. According to many scholars the notion of identity is debatable in every major field; politics, gender, race and sexuality. Identity plays a central role in shaping human character, it is involved in nationalism and ethnic conflicts (Horowitz, Smith ETAL...) The idea of identity constructs diasporas groups that are presented as the concept of minority, which itself is viewed differently according to the beliefs of each minority, in addition to its worldwide role it plays. And how the change it makes in a particular society is itself an effective force in shaping a new future. By the end of 19TH century, New York became a gate for immigrants, by 1900 immigrants constituted over 76 % of the city's population (Alina Polyak, Jewish New York in Abraham Cahan and Henry James, p 6). The term "Melting Pot" came to describe the hectically populated yet miraculously homogeneous streets of the East side of this city.. A city where 79 different ethnic groups coexisted, "Home of the free", "land of opportunities" and "rags to riches"... were all expressions to commercialize the American soil.

Nonetheless America had strategic plans for gathering new inhabitants indeed, and did well with the advertisement to brainwash people and attract them towards a promising land that welcomes all regardless of the color of their skin their religion, and their ethnicity, but one must look back to see that this was the only reason that plucked people out of where they belong and plant them elsewhere, that pushed them out of their frontiers, and made them flee to where they had to endure the thought of having to melt their culture into someone else's and resign to assimilation. Take for example the Jewish migratory movement, a minority that is known for its power and one that had lived for decades in scattered bits across the globe mostly for the Jewish Diaspora, until the end of the nineteenth century when they started to immigrate from eastern and Western Europe to America. To be viewed first as the "other"

which presented them in America as aliens and inferior to the extent they were a marginalized groups whose identity seen to be differ in many ways unlike the civilized, superior, as well as those who fit in and cope. Thus, these assumption held against them were an obstacle to live belong, and practice freedom freely without any judgmental constraints. Moreover, the Jewish virtue was there within these minorities yet the freedom to show it was absent. This prejudice and hatred against the Jews was intense and spread elsewhere in USA to ruin their image as well as the racial manifestation was extremely dark. It was proved that these individuals struggled for prosperity and welfare. This negative phenomenon which was called (anti-Semitism, judeophobia, anti Jewish racism and oppression) was a matter of debate, attempting to reveal the reason of such assumption! This oppression shows what force and power is more manipulative in this matter, it aims to give explanatory power to those in charge under conditions of social and racial instability.

This remarkable movement of moving to the new land was not in vain, it held a purpose behind. So what reasons did stand behind this historical scene! was it economic or was it for a religious aim! Was it segregation and the fact that they saw America as a land of rags and riches? Some two and a half millions Eastern European Ashkenazi Jews arrived in America between 1881 and the Johnson- Red act of 1924, which effectively halted Jewish immigration using the national origins quota because this period saw a nearly hundred-fold increase in America Jewish population from a half- century earlier(Hasia R. Diner, Eric L. Goldstein. ETAL...P 1)

Since literature is an artistic tool that draws down the unsaid into words and discourses, it deals with ideologies, assumption, attitudes, convention, and thoughts, it puts what is assumed into action with organized and a well-structured piece.

The presented thesis explores and explains how ideology is constructed and hence reflected. It also offers insight about the notion of minority in relation to identity loss in the

Jewish Diaspora, through the consciousness of the protagonist along with his internal thoughts. as well as matters of acculturation shown in Abraham Cahan novel “the rise of David Levinsky” and in his other famous novels Taking into account that Abraham Cahan was a prominent politician, Socialist, activist leader and a union organizer among Jewish immigrants Diaspora in the United States, he was the editor and founder of many Jewish journals among them; the forward newspaper, that helped in the formation of Jewish labor movement, in which it was written in Yiddish, he used his ancestors language to inform the immigrants of the congenial news with reference to democratic socialism, it covered political and social issues as well as providing educational lessons in both Yiddish and English for the readers, thus to be translated to English when he moved to America. Abraham Cahan accomplished spiritual and psychological prosperity in new land that was perceived as the land of opportunities.

Literature review:

It was clearly known and through history events that at the end of the 19TH century and the beginning of the 20TH, the lower Eastern side of America was a representation of a new racial existence, which many from Europe settled there, however, this side was an exotic place for stranger inhabitation only, who were sealed from the rest of the American world “it is a real place that serves as a background for fictional events” this place has shaped Cahan life (Alana polyak, Jewish new York in Abraham Cahan and Henry James, p6.)

There exist many studies of the two novels chosen by Abraham Cahan that shed light on the notions studied in this thesis. in the light of immigrants themes in American literature, many works have tackled the issue of individuals struggle and the American character AS WELL AS being torn between old self and new one in a new land, due to assimilation circumstances, Among them the great voice in America Henry James, whose book “ *the American scene*” was seen as a contradiction of ideas in which he indulged in racist criticism

of black race as incapable of alertness or development, representation of ethnic life, In New York the observer is surrounded by electric cars, carrying a “foreign load”, which presents “undisguised and unashamed” (Henry James, *The American scene*, p125) Holding an assumption that America new comers were at home is a “cliché”, in which he stated “the immigrants themselves spoke of being thrust into an alien world which they variously personified as a thief, a whore, or a slaughterhouse”(Jeffery Saperstein, *A Craving for history, immigrants themes in jewish American literature*, p16)

[...] Henry James is filled with a sense of disgust. Jews are compared to “fish of over-developed proboscis” snakes and worms not human beings, He cannot help but notice the modernizing of “The New Jerusalem” as he calls it. There are things like the machinery for producing electricity, fire escapes and phone lines. He notices that there is development in the poorest neighborhoods, but for him it is nothing but “organized cage for the nimbler class of animals in some great zoological garden... for human squirrels and monkeys. (Henry James, 133) another significant work have dealt with cultural shock; **Sabine Haenni**, in her essay “*Visual and Theatrical Culture, Tenement Fiction, and the Immigrant Subject in Abraham Cahan’s Yekl,*” seems to echo this concern when she argues that immigrant fiction can never “fully account for the immigrant subject outside middle-class norms of intimacy, privacy, and interiority” (519) which results in an immigrant subject left at a standstill. When black settlers Keziah and Charles Grier started clearing their frontier land in 1818, they couldn't know that they were part of the nation's earliest struggle for equality.

Furthermore, “*The acculturation in immigrant groups into American society*” by **William. S. Bernard** 1971” is one of the significant books dealt with minority’s transformation. The aimed of the series was to find out how the immigrant groups made it in the American society in which he implies in the general introduction that "they draw conclusions about the social dynamics involved that are still valid, for immigrants are still

coming to America ... The details of the picture may change ... but the underlying realities are constant."

*"having the leisure to write fiction meant having achieved some measure of success in America....."(p 45, DAVID M. FINE.) In which these books focuses on the change due to intensive worldwide migration, how they adopt and cope in the host culture.

In writing the social and cultural history of the settlements of a millions of and half East European Jewish immigrants in New York City during 1850-1914 **MOSES RISCHIN** wrote "*The promised city*" which is a remarkable book as well tackling the transformation of the minority and its interaction in new lands atmosphere.

Methodology Section:

Since the novel we dealt with is a narrative self portrayal, the belonging and stream of consciousness of the author that focused on the writer transformation in different levels. We attempt to analysis our sample discourse through following analytical approaches; the neo-historicism approach that was opted to search the relation between the novel and its historical context, and as well the relation between past events and the construction of the presence. It aims at digging into history through literature. In addition to the autobiographical and psychological approach that focuse more on qualitative reasoning; qualitative tends to explain a phenomenon of an individual's role in a society. The use of these two approaches assists to dig more about the ideology and power used in terms of affecting the notion of identity and the self. Autobiographical literary approachused in a research to reach profound insights about the nature of the work, taking into consideration the author background and previous conventions and how his race was marginalized and segregated in the homeland and the host culture as well, in which having a selfness identity was an obstacle in the American society. We will also attempt to dig in the author psyche, and question identity and ideology power through the protagonists in both novels

“The Rise of David Levinsky” “tale of New York ghetto.” Who is the other face of the currency. The work will be divided into three main chapters; the first chapter will deal with theoretical parts which will contain brief history of the minority, Jewish- American literature, and the ideology and religion of Cahan. The second chapter will be analysis of the novel content in relation to dichotomies and concepts. And the third part shall gather and sum up both chapters.

Our focus therefore, will be a complete analysis to the two Jewish American by Abraham Cahan, autobiographical novels that explained the author’s own experience and held his own reasons, as we will go through his psyche as a person and as a Jewfish separately to find out which of the two was the most tingled that gave him stronger reasons and had him change his own fate afterwards. This work also aims to draw the real picture of the struggle of minorities who thrive at best to earn their right and erase the assumption of inferiority that devours the positive and genuine as well as the virtue of the other. This approach enables us to extract the self-identity, the belonging and the memory of the author; since the author of an autobiography writes eye-witness accounts or better yet records reassembles the scattered elements of his individual self and regroups them in a comprehensive sketch, and because the author is both self and more than self; He exists both within and beyond social space and historical time. Men and women become fully human only by reaching the limits of personal or collective identity (Osatuke et al., p195).

Research questions

In our research we attempt to answer the following main questions:

- ⦿ What are the hardships that the protagonists faced in as immigrants in AMERICA, and can they be compared to the suffering he experienced in homeland RUSSIA?
- ⦿ To what extent CAN a minority make an influence within a new society?

- ⦿ How ABRAHAM CAHAN writings did influenced the AMERICAN societies in the 20TH century?
- ⦿ What are the main ideologies framed in the work?
- ⦿ Did they thrive to reach the goal and accomplish success in spite of losing religious and traditional conventions? And do abandoning strict beliefs pave the way to build the future? Can religion and conservative beliefs be a reason for one's self loss?

Aims of the study

The fundamental aim behind conducting this study is to examine the portrayal of acculturation of the Jewish diaspora in America in relation to the ambivalent ideas concerning some paradox such as religion and how it was somehow an obstacle to **Abraham Cahan** in seeking happiness and satisfaction. It aims as well to reveal the conflicting notions of the self and question of identity before and after; that is torn between old identities and presents one; that argues how the self is built by abandoning some strict conventions such as traditions and strict values, as well as creating a new self that can fit in. We also shall reveal some facts of how the American society perceive the Jewish

Minority in its system.

Motivation of the study

This work holds along our endless curiosity in ethnic groups struggle and alienation in new land, our study encompasses the interest in minorities and the loss of identity in the process of assimilation in new lands, we search for reasons in which why some people choose to leave their old self behind, whether for economic purposes or the fact they seek social integrity and fortune? Which will be explained in details within literature?

First chapter:

Theoretical Foundation

Introduction

Ideology, selfhood, and the construction identity are the center and main themes in any immigrant writings and in every ethnical literature and cultures. Abraham Cahan, the Jewish author who dealt with minority issues in forming an identity, his intellectual works were spread all over Europe and America during the late 19th and 20th century. Which attracted and impressed many American writers (Sanford E. Marovitz, *the lonely new American of Abraham Cahan*) among them the literary critic William Dean Howells who were curious of the magnificent Jewish life in Eastern Europe, in which he also was a motive and an encouragement to Abraham Cahan to write about such matters? “*Yeki: a tale of the New York City*” was produced as a response to this encouragement. (William Dean Howells's, *Novella review and excerpt thereof, “New York Low Life in Fiction”*). William Howells states: “No American fiction of the year merits recognition more than these Russian stories of a Yiddish life” William Dean Howells.

This chapter provides clear insights of the concepts included the study which presents to the reader a concise and precise opening of his historical overview of the Jewish minority back in the days during 1800 and till the present day and how Jewish events such as the terrifying event the holocaust led them to escape homeland seeking refuge in “the world of opportunities”. Moreover, this part consisted of the representation of Jewish literature and works produced by the Jewish authors within the American community after the immigration and settlement in addition to some influential Jewish- American writes. To finish the chapter with the center of this thesis Abraham Cahan, his religion and life before and after arriving to the new world. Along with his ideologies.

I. The Representation of Minority in the American Society: A Historical overview of Jewish immigration

A. Brief history of Jewish movement to America:

“In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.” Erik Erikson. From this quote we realize that the notion of identity is a well-known concept of human being, it is agreed upon that it stands as an essential part of one’s character; it is what pushes the one to stand out in a crowd practicing power and authority. Thus, it is built by private and religious conventions belonging to a certain ethnic group; it is a set belief and attitude held by a person or ethnic groups. “Unlike a drop of water which loses its identity when it joins the ocean, man does not lose his being in the society in which he lives. Man’s life is independent. He is born not for the development of the society alone, but for the development of his self.”-B. R. Ambedkar.

[A] It is a common social belonging for defining oneself against the other. According to many scholars the concept of identity is debatable in every major field; politics, gender, race and sexuality. Identity plays a central role in shaping human character, it is involved in nationalism and ethnic conflicts (Horowitz, Smith, ETAL...) The idea of identity constructs diasporas groups that are presented as the concept of minority, which itself is viewed differently according to the beliefs of each minority, in addition to its worldwide role it plays. And how the change it makes in a particular society is itself an effective force in shaping a new future. Identity is something not stable it is a process that experience changes over time; it is a personal representation of the past, constructing and living the present with a better view towards the future. Influencing and being influenced by the circumstances. “Before I can live with other folks I’ve got to live with myself, the one thing that does not abide by majority rule is a person’s conscience.”-Harper Lee.

It is familiar for a foreigner to be perceived at first as a threat that the land would encounter, Questioning the purpose and whether the new arrivals would volunteer in any

possible way to make a slight change. As every new arrival, the Jews were faced with a question of acculturation matter: whether they could protect and maintain their identical self and traditional values in the light of secularism that was the core of the new environment?

The Shtetl was the spot in Eastern Europe where most Jews population settled, anti-Semitism was a routine and life style in Russia during 1880s, which led them to escape the harsh reality: “There is a streak of sadness in the blood of my race. Very likely it is of Oriental origin. If it is, it has been amply nourished by many centuries of persecution.” (The rise of David Levinsky, P4)

Many immigrant Jews has succeeded in making it out in America in which they experienced huge transformation and made use of the opportunities in the host culture, they maintained success and wealth yet they lost the old identity and sought an American identity to reach the goal they searched for in the first place. One proof of the remarkable success was the well-known fictional works of the Jewish writer, activist, socialist, and creator of the Jewish labor party as well as the editor of the famous daily forward magazine; Abraham Cahan, the center of this work, whom he left an echo with his famous writing that mostly dealt with immigrant themes in new land. Abraham Cahan was a unique example of rags to riches stories, to rise up from the bottom of poverty to success and fortune.

“The metamorphosis I have gone through Strikes me as nothing short of a miracle. I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America in 1885_with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars and recognized as one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade in the United States.” (The Rise of David Levinsky, P3)

He struggled in his childhood as a poor lad who could not even offer to study in private school after his father died leaving the burden on Chan’s mother. In which she attempts to make her child a religious person through memorizing the Talmud to make others jealous of his religious knowledge.

“All I remember of my father is his tawny beard, a huge yellow apple he once gave me at the gate of an orchard where he was employed as watchman, and

the candle which burned at his head his body lay under a white shroud on the floor. I was less than three years old when he died, so my mother would carry me to the synagogue in her arms to have somebody say the Prayer for the Dead with me. I was unable fully to realize the meaning of the ceremony, of course, but its solemnity and pathos were not altogether lost upon me. There is a streak of sadness in the blood of my race. Very likely it is of Oriental origin. If it is, it has been amply nourished by many centuries of persecution.”

Nonetheless, David was against this, he hoped for a long-term aim which would be achieved only through alienation to the civilized land; America.

To comprehend what the so-called Jewish history and culture, as well as their worldwide role in influencing the other and being influenced. Besides the turn-taking role they play, one should know what the term Jewish refers to. And what does look like to be a Jewish with specific conventions! Which would answer the given question of the Jews formed identity and self reformation. The question being imposed tends to dig in ideological, spiritual, psychological, cultural, ethnic, religious, political, genealogical, and personal aspects of the Jewish minority as a sub-group. Their aim was to maintain the whole community in unity to establish their own world and nation shaped by their own mutual beliefs and identity which this can give sense to their history and traces left. Which would give value to their national tradition and heritage that unites them all worldwide to give sense to the “Jewish history.” The Jews were known to save and stick to the traces of their past and history as memories to the next generations, in which the works of many outstanding writers still to be found on the book shelves of Jewish history lovers. In which whenever they feel nostalgic they open a book and recall the past in form of written words. British historian Herbert Butterfield described this obsession stating: “A people not only supremely conscious of the past but possibly more obsessed with history than any other nation that has ever existed” (p 6).

Moses Mendelssohn 1765 to his friend the historian Thomas Abbet:

“What do I know of history? If it’s so much as carries the name of history, be it natural history, political history or intellectual history, it never wanted to enter my head; and I yawn whenever I have to read something historical unless its style keeps me awake” (qtd .Michael Brenner, p 6)

A vision for national autonomy of east European Jews was held by Heinrich Graetz in his analysis of history of Jews as a national minority when advocating Jewish autonomy and independence. His work “*Jost’s history*” was a tool to fight for emancipation in which he aimed to make the German Jews proud of their history. However, New York lower east side was a historical and a cultural center where America kept the Jews away in this separate place from its inhabitants. They built synagogues, museums, and private schools where they practiced their strict religion, taking into consideration that Judaism was a faith as all other strict beliefs. The Jews were To be viewed at first as the “other” which presented them as aliens and inferior to the extent they were a marginalized groups whose identity seen to be differ in many ways unlike the civilized, superior, as well as those who fit in and cope easily. Moreover, around the time of enlightenment and emancipation a Hebrew Zionist schools where it was the platform to perform some Jewish history as a separated discipline, Gurshom Scholem claimed that the Jewish studies performance should descend from the platform program due to the fact that it dealt with embracing subjects such as Superstation, myths, and Jewish crimes against Jerusalem... Thus, these assumption held against them were an obstacle to live, belong, and practice freedom freely without any judgmental constraints.

Moreover, the Jewish virtue was there within these minorities yet the freedom to show it was absent. This prejudice and hatred against the Jews was intense and spread elsewhere in USA to ruin their image as well as the racial manifestation was extremely dark. A question was raised is why they were perceived as this? Even the non-Jews who were referred to as gentiles who were known in biblical Hebrew as *goy*, most of them were Christians who

regarded their origin as real Hebrew. They held this hate towards them it was because of being illiterate and inferior race. Philosopher Morris Raphael Cohen stated that by saying:

“My first Attitude toward non-Jews . . . was that they were not fully human beings. Those I saw were ignorant peasants and I heard of generals and *pritzim* (lords) who were our persecutors. I did not understand their ways and they did not understand mine.”(Gentile New York, the image of non Jews among Jewish immigrants, P1)

It was proved that these individuals struggled for prosperity and welfare. This negative phenomenon which was called (anti-Semitism, anti-Jewish racism and oppression) was a matter of debate, attempting to reveal the reason of such assumption! This oppression shows what force and power is more manipulative in this matter, it aims to give explanatory power to those in charge under conditions of social and racial instability. American Jews were one minority integrated with others, they all aimed to work in unites to stand against a potentially intolerant majority.

The immigration of the Jews over the centuries to America has helped to shape the mixed identity that we now know, this historical movement includes immigration from Europe and Israel which were its population mostly Jews, The Jewish movement has started in the seventeenth century, where new comers were welcomed and tolerated to step their foot on new York soil the place which was called land of riches and opportunity. The question that should be asked is why the Jews chose America as a place for them? It is known in history that the Jews among their race experienced a struggle and social conflicts of what exactly the Jewish identity is. They could not agree of the Jewish nature and history they shared, thus, they chose New York as a destination to live and practice their freedom, to be a free Individual by choosing what religion to follow, and that can be accomplished easily in the secular land.

The existence of this hegemonic group was historically divided into three waves, including the early arrivals of the Dutch colony whom they settled in North America and

created a unified community to practice their freedom at ease. Around 1820/1830 the massive migration of the German Jews started in which many emigrated from Eastern Europe (*Jewish life in America, crash course in Jewish history*.) they were poor when they arrived and had nothing to lose but their religious conventions, spirituality as well as their ancestor's traditions. This remarkable movement of moving to the new land was not in vain, it held a purpose behind. Some two and a half millions Eastern European Ashkenazi Jews arrived in America between 1881 and the Johnson- Red act of 1924, which effectively halted Jewish immigration using the national origins quota because this period saw a nearly hundred-fold increase in America Jewish population from a half- century earlier(Hasia R. Diner, Eric L. Goldstein. ETAL...P 1)

The period between 1820 1924 was a huge period of Jewish life in America in which Judaism shaped their modern lives. "Although one city—New York—served as the home to the largest Jewish community, housing about 45 percent of all American Jews, Jews."(HASIA R. DINER, *the Jews of the united states* P447).

If any era in the history of American Jewry could be considered a "golden age," it would be the twenty years following World War II. In this brief era American Jews pushed the troubled memories of the recent past—the uncertainties of the Depression, the anti-Semitism of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, and the horrors of the Nazi era—to the margins of their concerns. Instead of feeling anxious about their status, they crafted a series of new communal practices that reflected the dominant themes of the postwar age: prosperity and affluence, suburbanization and acceptance, the triumph of politics. "A GOLDEN AGE? 1948–1967." *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, by HASIA R. DINER, 1st ed., University of California Press, 2004, pp. 259–304. *JSTOR*, "The Jewish population in New York went from about 80,000 in 1880 to 1.5 million in 1920." (Daniel Soyer, *Tracing the History of Jewish Immigrants and Their Impact on New York City*)

The 17th century noted as well an ideology known as the enlightenment which emerged in the middle of the century after the end of the Renaissance period, it was referred to as the age of reason and science which was known of liberal democracy and industrial revolution. It is an intellectual movement characterized by new thoughts and it broke down from religious matters and god and more into secularism and atheism. Thus it focused on the notion of individualism which each individual is valuable and worth living the best conditions.

It is true that the reason people escape a place is because they find themselves being ill-treated and forced to live a life they dislike. Jewish women were living this kind of life back in the days. Of course, the orthodox families were as strict as any other religions in world. Women in old days received little education and importance claiming that education serves them nothing to fulfill their role in a society as “housekeepers” they were inferior to men in which they were intellectually weak, unlike men. The role of men in Jewish community was as much as Islam. Men are responsible and deserves education for the role they play inside and outside the family as wise and responsible individuals. The traditional Jewish community reduces her identity to only a wife, daughter, housewife. Yet, This assumption was not only held in Jewish communities, but also in “America the land of dreams” where the patriarchal system existed to lower the expectation of women (Lena Basham Greer, *Jewish women and the specter of the old world in Jewish immigrant fiction*,P15)

Where Feminism movement appeared in the late 1800-1900 to defend their rights and achieve gender equality ensuring that they are given a voice as men.

B. The holocaust as a part of Jewish history:

When reading and analyzing any Jewish writing with reference to previous and past traces of this race, we must shed lights on memorial happenings that occurred in a period of time that made human life drift and changed stable and fixed things.

As Elie Wiesel 1928-2016 stated “History is a collective memory of several events, without memory there would be no civilization, no society, and no future.”

One of these remarkable events was the execution of the majority of Jews. Despite of this inhuman Genocides or what so-called the shoah or holocaust (1941 and 1945) this terrifying event stands as a part of the history of European Jews. The execution of millions of European Jews who mostly were slaves, disabled people, black people, gypsies, and those who had a different sexual orientation (homosexuals :LGBT), they were marginalized which resulted in elimination of this race. The authority was under the hands of the Nazis power during WWII, it stood for many who considered it as an act to pave life for those worth living. Therefore, the worthless individuals characterized without valuable value should be eliminated. The hatred of the Jews lasted as long as possible to commit inhuman crimes. For many historians the Nazi racial theorists did indeed embrace human and racial evolution. They were not only taught that humans had evolved from primates, but they believed the Aryan or Nordic race had evolved to a higher level than other races whom he referred to in his famous speech mein kampf: “my struggle” as “undesirable human beings”. According to him this classification was due to the harsh climatic conditions that influenced natural selection leading to glorify the Aryan race as a superior one. “All the human culture, all the results of art, science, and technology that we see before us today, are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan, The Aryan is not greatest in his mental qualities as such, but in the Extent of his willingness to put all his abilities in the service of the community.”(Adolf Hitler, *Meine Kampf nation and race*) thus, the Nazi ideology was a social Darwinism. (Richard

Weikart, *The Role of Darwinism in Nazi Racial Thought* P1) however, many other historians rejected this latter assumption claiming that the Nazis have already classified the race according to their potential and not because of human selection and liked the struggle for existence (*Existenzkampf*) but not human evolution. George Mosse argued that “human evolution was incompatible with Nazi ideology.” Besides, HITLER has explained the idea of anti-Semitism in a speech 1920 entitled “*why we are anti Semite*” that the Nordic race is the most superior race unlike other inferior races claiming that only the strongest can survive and develop traits unlike the weak who is easily deceived by those in charge, by not possessing any spontaneous defense ability to show resistance and power to live. Thus, racial mix threatens human nature law.

“When man attempts to rebel against the iron logic of nature, he comes into struggle with the principles to which he himself owes his existence as a man. And this attack must lead to his own doom.” (Adolf Hitler, *Meine Kampf*, P16-1925-1926)

“Anti-Semitism is the dislike of the unlike.”(Elana Gomel, Hana Wirth Neshet, what is Jewish literature, P2) Lack of Tolerance of ambiguity is seen with those who stand as unfamiliar individuals shaped with different traditions, religion, language, culture. They are perceived as undesirable to the majority, in which they experience hatred as a result.

II. Representation of Jewish-Americans Literature

"It takes a great deal of history to produce a little literature."(Henry James)

As it is said, every narrative has a purpose, and every written piece delivers a message through what so-called literature, literature is the written art that helps to understand different cultural, political, and racial issues through covering various events. Literature is more than a mere entertainment.

The Jewish American literature was presented in the well-known Yiddish newspaper the daily forward. Thanks to this magazine Jews have echo in the western world.

The traces of the beginning of the Jewish writing in America including sermons, drama, philosophy, poetry, poems, fictional novels and art performed in Yiddish theatre that the Germans wrote. Those who emigrate are no different from those who experience colonization in which their literature contained ambivalent and contradictory attitudes resulted from acculturation notions experienced with the outsider like those of culture shock and resistance as a start, ending with acceptance of manipulation “hegemony” when they accept the fact of the cultural influence of the other, racially and religiously.

America offered the Jews with equal rights along with a secular narrative as well; the Jews are by definition “equal parts of great governmental machine” (Hana Wirth-Nesher, *Jewish American literature*, P18) in which their intellectual works flourished in literary moments within the American society. Their writings were published in many languages to build new interpretations and raise awareness of various ideologies within these writings, additionally, to cover the history and attract readers from all ethnicities to entertain and educate themselves of the Jewish history and culture. “One language has never been enough for the Jewish people” (Shmuel Niger 1941.)

The reaction of the reader towards the piece he read and how he puts himself in the same place of the producer of the work is as important as the reaction of the writer when he finishes his work and receives criticism. "What is wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it towards the condition of the man who wrote."E. M. Forster.

Most Jewish writings were written and translated into various languages, among these languages the Yiddish language which was more expressive to their cultural heritages and life styles. Hence to understand the concept of the so-called Jewish literature, we first must

answer to the question of who are the Jews and the Jewish people, question about Jewish identity and considerations of Jewish self-identification.

The use of Jewish-American literature instead of American-Jewish literature has been favored by many scholars and historians to emphasis on the value of the Jewish writing in America and gives credit to the trace of this field. The Jewish writings of the Eastern Europe have contributed to make an influence within the American society. It was first written in Yiddish language that was inherited from ancestors, we come to define Jewish literature as any work produced by individuals from Jewish cultural background either in their homeland or in foreign lands (America) in which it reveals fictional representation of certain issues, Jewish writings are known to carry blessings and paradoxes. Most Jewish works covered immigrant themes and ideological concerns, especially those who are assimilated in new environment to fetch the Jewish identification. Furthermore, Jews are known for having strong religious and cultural legacy, they posses intense ability to memorize and learn the religious verses and rules in the Torah and Talmud; the religious book of the Jews. They practice their prayers in the synagogue where the spiritual leaders of Judaism “rabbis” are in charge of the learning process and the safety of the holly place where man devotes his life, time, and soul to learn the word of God, teach it to his children, and deliver it to next generations.

1. Influential Jewish-American writers:

We all know that the Jewish culture and history goes back to colonial times. From 1880 to 1914 the Ashkenazi Jews migrated to America carrying with them their religious views to the western world (*Jewish American Literature. A Critical Introduction*, 2019). The political and economical crises led them to seek refuge in America, in addition to world war2 horrible scenes.

Philip Roth, Allen Ginsberg, Saul Bellow, Grace Paley, Bernard Malamud, and Many more Jewish-American immigrants and authors who arrived to a new land with ambivalent attitudes to narrate the despair they escaped from after postwar2...and as well to rebel against the brutality of the host land, which gave meaning to Jewish identity, history and culture including Jewish themes that characterized their fictional writing (Saul Austerlitz, *Mainstream American Jewish literature*)

They spoke of their experiences in homeland and shared their personal memoirs through writings. Among them **Henry Roth**, who was known as the son of Jewish immigrants, whose novels “*call it asleep* and *a diving rock on the Hudson*” flourished as masterpieces in the world of Jewish-American literature during 1934-1995. As most modern Jewish writers, Roth uses the famous technique that was developed by psychologists and used modernist writers such as the well-known author James Joyce, who used it in his famous novel *a portrait of an artist as a young man*, technique stream of consciousness to narrate an experience and an autobiography of a Yiddish-speaking lad who was raised in a ghetto, he uses this literal technique (Bildungsroman) to depict the internal and psychological struggle of the protagonist as a ghetto boy from childhood to maturity. As well as to reveal his perceptions of the surroundings though what he sees. Moreover, in addition to this remarkable novel, there exists one of the outstanding fictional Jewish novels written in America entitled *passage from home* by **Isaac Rosenfeld** who was known for thriving for the pleasure of books in which he devoted himself to pour the creativity he was gifted into marvelous works, The novel as well is a self-portrayal of the protagonist Bernard the golden boy in struggle with his Jewish family, a depiction of adolescent experience, the exotic Jewish environment along with the American alienation. (Irving Howe, *Passage from home* by Isaac Rosenfeld, 1946)

Bernard Malamud was on the list of the few of these writers who spoke of conservative matters and faith storytelling like sins and redemption, to keep the Jewish tradition and history

alive in their writings: “the purpose of a writer is to keep civilization from destroying itself.” (Interview, New York Post Magazine, September 14, 1958.) But Roth and Saul Bellow were not among those who spoke felt nostalgic to the past. In conclusion the list of the Jewish-American writers goes on and on...

III. Abraham Cahan(1860-1951) Religion, Ideology:

Immigrants and minority authors share the perspective to view themselves as different race who suffer from social prejudice that at times turns into discrimination and manipulation. Among all the influential Jewish writers that their names embedded in history, the Lithuanian born novelist Abraham Cahan remains one of the top influential Russian writers who made a radical change in the world of literature. Abraham fled his homeland Russia after the assassination of the Czar Alexander II. He had nothing but his Jewish self when he escaped to America, yet it was never an obstacle for him to achieve his dreams. As all ghetto population he was among those who lived in the depth of misfortune confronting the unfortunate reality as a lad.

“I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America in 1885_with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars and recognized as one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade in the United States.” (The Rise of David Levinsky, P3

He produced and published many contemporary literary novels among them “*white terror and the red*” “*the lower east side Jews*” “*the imported bridegroom*” and the well-known autobiography and the center of this thesis “*the Rise of David Levinsky*” and “*Yeki: tale of new York ghetto*”. The list of his writings goes on and on...He was engaged in several organizations for Jewish rights. He inspired and entertained millions who are fond of Jewish art and literature. If you are a Jew or someone who is into Diasporas history and culture, your book shelf certainly would be full of Abraham Cahan outstanding writings. He is known as the best producer of minority fiction in relation with the process of assimilation and

Americanization, in which he built an intellectual bridge of his own cultural heritage and the host culture. Besides, he was seen as a politician, communist, socialist, union organizer, leader of labor party of Jewish immigrants in the united states, activist, and the founder and editor of many articles and newspapers among them *the daily forward newspaper* that covered Jewish issues such as the assimilation process and the function of transformation of these individuals to form a social identity (Adams Morgan, *Ghetto Regionalism: Place, Identity, and Assimilation in the Fiction of Abraham Cahan, Sui Sin Far, and Zitkala-Sa*, P8.)

The ability how the majority performed dominance against the minority and immigrant individuals was shaped by what so-called the ghetto effect. Goldfield and Lane described the term ghetto as “generates its own unique, Complex patterns of behavior, which arise from the shared experiences of its residents in their responses to a potentially injurious environment and a hostile outside society” (Adams Morgan, P10).

In spite of this racial hatred the minority was as productive as the majority. Cahan arose from a strongly-religious family who were conservative and preserved the word of God, his parents prepared him to enter religious schools and institutes to learn the Talmud at a young age, however, Cahan was liberal and more interested in secular studies, and this view increased after his arrival to new York. The ironic thing that he was religious on the outside for his family reputation, yet his soul thrived for secularism because he saw that the break from religion would be a way to achieve success. Mastering the English language was a step to start his intellectual journey in the foreign land.

What was notable of Abraham Cahan was his struggle his fictional characters suffer from, in both his fictional works “*the rise of David Levinsky*” and “*Yeki: the tale of ghetto*” he depicts the life the protagonists left and the new life they tend to create. An identical clash between tradition and culture are always present in his autobiographies. When one reads for

Abraham Cahan, a sense of old and new flavor are often found within his works, he aims to explain and justify why the old prevents freedom unlike the new that shapes life and brings relief to the soul, Nonetheless, he always draws a picture of sincere nostalgia to the old self, stating that no matter what the one could accomplish of success and power, he shall always yearn for the spot he arose from where it comes a moment he wishes to go back in time to preserve what was lost.

“My inner identity impresses me as being precisely the same as it was thirty or forty years ago. My present station, power, the amount of worldly happiness at my command, and the rest of it, seem to be devoid of significance” (the Rise of David Levinsky, P4)

“The last years that I spent in my native land and my first years in America come back to me with the distinctness of yesterday. Indeed, I have a better recollection of many a trifle of my childhood days than I have of some important things that occurred to me recently.”(*The Rise of David Levinsky*, P4)

Abraham Cahan focused in most of his writings on the notion of selfness, autonomy, solidarity, individual happiness and satisfaction, he aimed to deliver a precious message to his race, that a balance between the old self and the new world effect should be maintained, that the unfair picture the majority dominance draws of human life and how it tells them to live, act and co-exist is have to be eliminated. “Above all, you must fight conceit, envy and every kind of ill-feeling in your heart” (Abraham Cahan) the assumption that only the white citizens and English speaking are superior and the productive majority. In which immigrants must assimilate and cope to be as productive as the majority to become part of the American identity. Thus, individual character becomes representative for to get rid of stereotypes and inferiority. (Tabitha Adams Morgan, *Ghetto Regionalism: Place, Identity, and Assimilation in the Fiction of Abraham Cahan, Sui Sin Far, and Zitkala-Sa*, P66). His outstanding fictional works made his golden name embed in history as the father of Jewish American literature.

IV. Selfhood and identity formation:

“Identity cannot be found or fabricated but emerges from within when one has the courage to let go” Doug Cooper. According to many psychologists to search for inner identity and form is a life task, it is a life journey to discover and explore the value of the self. Identity is divided into different types in different subfields such as identity of politics, of race; of gender and sexuality... thus, it is shaped according to social groups. Personal and social identity are two different identities types of self-formation, in which personal identity comes to be defined as the essential one that characterizes the person as unique from any other group which stands as a superior individual. Social identity as it is defined refers to social factors of “us” and “them”; the self and the other. Which presents individual according to the shared similarities and differences with other members. Social identity refers to: Us versus them, men versus women, black versus white... In the other hand, personal identity is: the “I” and “Me” (John C. Turner, Penelope Oakes ETAL, *personal and social identity: self and social context*, p3).

Who am I? Where do I belong? And for what reason do I exist? All these are questions should cross one’s mind when speaking of personal and social identity exploration and formation. These questions are involved in general fields of psychological and social processes including the goals we draw and set, the decisions and choices we make, and ambitions we pursue, in addition to our sensations and emotions we have for others in relationships either friendly or hostile reactions, They are faced whenever we speak of social groups and ethnic groups. (Vivian L Vignoles, *identity social and personal*). All of the above self-representations are under the wide term identity or what so-called selfhood. Identity was a focus in major disciplines like philosophy and psychology. Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis who answered the question of the human psyche and talked about the notion of the self and the subject, the recognition of the identity and how human behaviors change.

“The self was regarded as the subject of both our mental and our physical actions, i.e. the thinker of our thoughts, experience of our experiences, perceiver of our perceptions, feeler of our feelings, as well as the initiator of our physical actions, the agent.”(Alex Watson, *Who Am I? The Self/Subject According to Psychoanalytic Theory*,P3). The attitudes and behaviors we possess are the production of our psyche. To make an understanding of the structure of the psyche we should refer to family and environment influence on the self. He focused on the idea of personality and identity formation is a result of the structure of the psyche, it is the gate to build a self.

Conclusion

This chapter was a theoretical explanation of the thesis being conducted, in which it included some traces and a brief history of the Jewish minority in Europe in addition to the immigration movement occurred in New York City during the late 19th and the beginning 20th Century. It tackled issues like the holocaust and the motives of this movement such as segregation and anti- Semitism against this race. Furthermore, the place of Jewish-American works and famous novels, besides to some influential writers wrote about minority struggle in “the land of opportunities”. In addition to the intellectual representations of literature explaining how identity was shaped in old world life Vs how the transformation it experienced in what so called a “new home”

This chapter also provides some facts of the Jewish-American influencer Abraham Cahan, such as his life in his homeland and his religion comparing to his intellectual and thoughts along with the ideology encountered in his writings as a socialist and political leader.

Chapter two:

The Jewish Identity

Under the Tide of Secularism

Introduction:

Jews were discriminated wherever they landed; their acceptance in a society was about null, and their interaction was virtually perished and tenuous. Provided that, the American everlasting notion of absolute freedom of religious practice and of life in general seemed like the perfect flip of the coin, for a decent living, for Jews, this was the avenue to a New Jerusalem; statistics show that there exist nearly 14 million Jews around the world. Most of them live in the United States and Israel, but was America anti-Semitism free at the real count? Were Jews able practice their religious rituals without bounds social stigma? Or more as Cahan puts it in the mouth of his protagonists; “Can a fellow be a good Jew in America?” and if assimilation is the only escape from the stake, would the Jew fellow asking himself of his Jewishness once and for all and fall to the trap of resilience and assimilation ? Would his identity dissolve within his search of acceptance and wishes to achieve the American dream?

Partone:

I. Conception of Jewishness, Judaism and secularism

1. What is Judaism?

The very known as the world’s oldest, first-of-three monotheistic religions, consists of a set of Beliefs summarized in what follows, the existence of one transcendent god called “Yahweh”. Their sacred book is called “Torah”, Pentateuch, it encompasses law and animates the way they operate in life, as well it sets forth their objectives, higher goals, and priorities. Jewish people worship their god in places called synagogues. Their spiritual leaders are called rabbis. The symbol of Judaism is the Star of David. Their prophet is Moses. A person is considered Jewish if his or her mother is Jewish. britannica.com

“Judaism, monotheistic religion developed among the ancient Hebrews. Judaism is characterized by a belief in one transcendent God who revealed himself to Abraham,

Moses, and the Hebrew prophets and by a religious life in accordance with Scriptures and rabbinic traditions. Judaism is the complex phenomenon of a total way of life for the Jewish people, comprisingtheology, law, and innumerable cultural traditions".
britannica.com

2. Jewishness:

As mentioned above Judaism represents the religion, whilst Jewishness on the other hand is to belong to a group of people who are Jewish, whose religion is Judaism, but one must know that the word Judaism holds a very broad meaning; it actually stands for both religion and ethnicity. "Judaism represents a people, an ethnicity as well as a religion; belief and observance alone are not sufficient criteria for Jewish identity" as mentioned in the book called *Religion Gone Astray*. This means, when someone is called Jew, we could be referring to the religion, as well as the ethnic group if not both: "It is fully possible to be atheist and Jewish at the same time" (Pastor Don Mackenzie, Rabbi Ted Falcon and Imam Jamal Rahmanp. 24).

This condition gives particularity and exclusivity the them, Jewish people, it could be one of the reasons that made them extreme ethnocentric beings, the concept of the Jewish election they claim is related to them being descendents of Abraham as if priesthood was passed to them from father to son, they call themselves god's chosen people, they actually believe they exist to fulfill a certain job; as if their existence revolves around a certain purpose, or they were charged with a certain mission.. That which they prize so much and put above all, unlike other minorities, Jews has their own way to operate inside a community, in a way that is neither ubiquitous nor volatile...though the election idea remains debatable even to Jews, many Jewish thinkers like Mordecai and Spinoza opposed the Jewish chosenness and the linear heredity of the prophetic mission saying that the Jewish possess neither a vocation nor a special social organization to make them this far exclusive, the confederates of the election idea dispatched into two groups based on their interpretation to this concept, reformers, who took the mission on their behalf, to reform a new realm for the Jewish race,

and another group who claimed that their mission is to spread the Jewish concepts across the world. “Israel was to be God’s instrument to accomplish this great revelation and would serve as the messenger and witness of God’s reality and law to all the other nations of the earth”

britannica.com

3. The Jewish identity

“Men may change their clothes, their politics, their wives, their religions, their philosophies, to a greater or lesser extent; they cannot change their grandfathers.” (Horace Kallen, culture and democracy in the U.S) .This groundbreaking notion cuts to the very heart of difference, and renders all racial conceptualizations even more debatable, without any farther ado, we all tend to think that race is pretty much disputable and real, we can see differences amongst us sculpted along within our own features,” he is Black”, “she is Caucasian”, “they are Arabs”,...this vision bespeaks the firm identification of what identity is for the self and equally for the other, as it puts clear the distance between the two. If we took a group of people across-seas and made them a minority, over years, their identity would rather disappear and milt in to the mass kinship which is strikingly dominant. This is more of a convention to anthropologists and scholars of this field, but to Jews, things just don’t work that way, whether a religious or an ethnic kinship, it does not seem to lose its features, at least not on the entire, it persists the dominance of other contestant identities and refuses to Assimilate, a Jew will always look like a Jew, and will always act like one, their stereotypes always fall true to their real character. On the one hand, being a Jew, means having the Jewish culture and Jewish religion, the Jewish identity frames the entire mindset of a Jew, having the Jewish identity means to relate to the Jewish entity and the Jewish ethnic group by ancestors and blood, by religion and culture, and by values and norms. Although science of race and genealogy do not affirm the existence of a one Jewish gene, the biological dimension to the Jewish identity is somehow debatable with the existence of genetic diseases, mutations and

the interactions to other Jews and to the environment. Jews are like any race subject to the nature/nurture influences, the Jewish identity remains the sequence of both biological and cultural criterions; in the very first lines of his book, whiteness of different color, Mathew Jacobson states: “We tend to think of race as being indisputable, *real*. It frames our notions of kinship and descent and influences our movements in the social world; we see it plainly on one another's faces. It seems a product not of the social imagination but of biology”, because it is mainly required for one to be born to a Jewish mother and to merge into the Jewish culture at once to be considered thereafter Jewish. Allegedly, this seemingly natural yet rather odd “blood-kinship” Jews creed in, draws a thick line between heredity and behavior, meaning, it suggests the existence of a common genetic composition that animates the behavioral controversy of a Jew even outside the environment of Jewish practice, and even years later.

In an essay of his, the French scholar Arthur de Gabeneau, invokes; “the modification it has undergone have never been enough to change the general character of the race”, I.e. Jews operate separately in what looks like “ideological pockets” inside the body of a certain society, they do not dispatch or degenerate. A close image to this is the familiar existence of ghettos in the very heart of either a secular or a religious society; this later allows the ethnic group to maintain its existence and persistence against the salient identity.

4. Secularism:

Secularism is a political term that namely means the separation of religion and state: “secularism is a stance to be taken about religion.” (Akeel Bilgrami, 2011).the word secularism cannot be reduced to mean one thing, there is no such thing as universal definition to this term, and it generally means to not force any individual into a certain religion or a certain belief, to run the state in the absence of religious order:

“A shorthand definition of secularism is that it advocates the separation of Church and state though beyond this there is no universally agreed meaning of the term.¹⁴ Different people mean different things by it and have done since George Holyoake introduced the term in 1846, defining it as “best indicating that province of human duty which belongs to this life.” (Gerard Philips. P.9)

Secularism emerged as result to the pressure caused by the existence of many religions under the governance of one state, making it hard if not impossible to equally satisfy each, as the conservative perspectives of some religion may limit those of a less conservative one, when it comes to sensitive and heavily debatable subjects such as women rights and gender discrimination. Henceforth, it came to allow individuals to operate in close harmony with in a community to have peace practicing each one’s creed and beliefs in absolute freedom, Holistically, secularism contributes to neutrality of the state and the equality of freedom and respect alike, allowing both agnostic/atheist and religious groups to coexist under one sky, as well as promoting interreligious homogeneity.

secularism is categorized based on the way it handles religion and religious principles, when firmly denying and refusing them under a legislative arguments, it is called hard secularism, when dealing with them in rather soft way it is called soft secularism, the first use of this term was on the hands of agnostic writer **George Holyoke**, who saw it was better to call a state naturalistic than to call it atheist, the concept of separation was contained earlier in the writing of **John Locke**, in his: *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, he discussed tolerance and persecution against religion through several reasons, he states that religion itself demands of its follower to accept and tolerate other religions: “The toleration of those that differ from others in matters of religion is so agreeable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the genuine reason of mankind, that it seems monstrous for men to be so blind as not to perceive the necessity and advantage of it in so clear a light.” (John Lock p.6). He also stated that church; as a religion should not come between people in their rights what so ever; nor could religion take away the wealth of men from their hands:

“Both in America and Europe, And neither Pagans there, nor any dissenting Christians here, can, with any right, be deprived of their worldly goods by the predominating faction of a court-church; nor are any civil rights to be either changed or violated upon account of religion in one place more than another.”, (abid,p. 27)

5. The Secular Jew

We mean by a secular Jew the Jew who is Jewish by ethnicity and not by religion, who is descendent of a Jewish mother, but stripped of his Judaism, this term is no coinage of today, a Jew can be secular and still be Jewish, as aforementioned there is a firm line, subtle but firm, between a Jew’s religion and identity, to say that a Jew is secular is to set his ethnicity and religion a part, the secular Jew is a Jew who belongs to the Jewish ethnic group but one that do not, necessarily, keep the Jewish beliefs, The word **Hiloni** and secular are used interchangeably, the term in its broadness is used to label nonobservant/nonreligious, unlike observant Jews who are easily identified and more conservative to their religion:

“The term Hiloni (secular) is commonplace in Israel as a means of identifying a type of Jew, a type of Jewish identity, and a type of Judaism. It carries different meanings to different people and different meanings depending on the context.”(Charles S. Liebman and Yaacov Yadga.p1)

The secular Jew can be thought of as defense mechanism against discrimination at some point, a Jew can let go of his surface Jewishness, which allows him to keep his inner identity and still get away with it despite the fact that, the physical print of Jew is sacred, as it was forbidden for Jews shave hair and side-locks, or go without a cop, let alone that observance is actually a part of the Jewish culture and it is what makes a Jew Jewish for non-Jews, but only on a surface level, and if one takes a minute to think about, it is not so hard to notice that Jews could have adopted this notion to gain public approval, in non Jewish or gentile countries, all for secular education and economic benefit.

II. Segregation of Jews in America: Acculturation as an Inevitable Outcome, Anti-Semitism in America and the Process of Americanization:

1. The process of acculturation

Definition

Acculturation is shortly defined as the sum of changes that crop up on individuals when being introduced to an unfamiliar culture and conditioned with new cultural aspects and criterions different than those of their native one. In other words, the process of acculturations is merely dissolving one's culture, gradually, into a new culture and adopting new cultural aspects. "The process of cultural change that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with each other" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 146). The process and outcomes of acculturation are different from one individual to another but it generally occurs under the same order.

2. Anti-Semitism in America

Definition:

We call a person "anti-Semite" when he or she shows negative attitudes (behavior or speech), hatred and hostility against Jewish people, on both scopes, individual and collective. Anti-Semitism than is a doctrine and an ideology that views Jews as inferior beings and holds negative perspectives on the Jewish communities, Jewish religion and culture, Webster's Dictionary defined anti-Semitism as: "hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group."

3. How did Jews become white folks?

In lesser or higher regards, the refashion of the concept of extreme liberty in the promised land was nonetheless confusing, since racism and discrimination were at control of the logic of race in the United States, especially after the “isolating hypnosis” and the prevention of migratory movements towards its soil. This later allowed the emergence of a collective view amongst American citizens who created an atmosphere of collective identity and a unified sense of belonging that later on reflected refusal and segregation against all new Landers, this sense is now recognized as **Nativism**, and it has a great share, but not all, in creating the concept of alienation in the U.S lands. Although one cannot help not to think of the fact that all American citizens, all, came ashore in the United States as free whites, which opposes the very notion of racial contest on the American soil and renders it illogical and forged at best. The matter of racial difference in the lands drops into the existence of a groundbreaking public, if public is the name, holding to a single consciousness that gave birth to such a collective illusion. But then again, the truth that casts itself in the middle of this debate is the, is the Aforementioned is the otherness Jews display when refusing to milt into the pot, for a matter of fact, this itself creates sensitivity against them.

The butter of the aforementioned explains in clear words the way Jews, like any other minority, were viewed, but it doesn't not mean Jews in particular were stopped from doing actually great in making their way to the top of race, just because they were segregated interiorized, or discriminated from white race despite of their being white, but somehow, Jews could find a way to become white folks, in her book, Karen Brodtkin Sacks cares to drive answers to this rhetorical question in reference to historical registrations of Jews' articulation in the U.S community; “Racism and anti-immigrant sentiment in general and anti-Semitism in particular, flourished in higher education and higher educational Jews were the first of Euro immigrants to inter colleges”

As was mentioned in the first chapter, migratory movement chose to flee to the American lands because they have seen there what they did not see elsewhere, they took refuge in the Americas seeking religious and ethnic tolerance, economic opportunities and secular education, they arrived first in the 17th century and settled in what is called now New York, but little they know, the famous expressions that advertised the American soil for the Jewish immigrants did somehow deny the existence of anti-Semitism in America, it's true that America offered unique opportunities for Jewish as well as other minorities, Jewish and Americans were both white but seemingly, they were of different shades, Americans too had negative regards for the Jewish immigrants.

“Civilized society also was not free of anti-Semitism. In the interwar years, American Jews faced educational quotas, discrimination in the professional sphere, restriction from residential and recreational communities and continued acts of outright physical violence. In relatively mainstream parts of American society, universities, clubs and other associations consistently denied membership to Jews.” Antisemitism.adl.org

It's true that the Jewish minority took benefits and profits of the American claimed charity but they also faced different types of segregation and discriminative behaviors made by Americans, they endured violent acts of hostility thrived crowds:

“By and large, they found freedom and opportunity in America. However, as outsiders bearing a history of condemnation by Christianity and by emergent racial science, Jews still found themselves scapegoated in America. Because some Jews were distinguishable by surname, manners and accents, the presence of a Jewish individual within a disreputable activity, even among a majority of non-Jewish actors, lent to unjust attributions of Jewish blame, relying on age-old antisemitic stereotypes that long had flourished in Europe.” Antisemitism.adl.org

Jewish minorities were hunted by anti-Semitism even on the so green American grass they longed for, they encountered mob violence and hostility-full acts and social prejudice, they were forcibly exiled from their homes and neighborhoods, prevented from booking in some Hebrew-hostile hotels and clubs, faced quotas in schools and university, were refused in

certain jobs and in some cases incriminated with bolshevism, and other crimes, in literature, They were mostly described in shaming, amply-hatred and disgust-full ways, they were represented as ugly, greedy and monstrous creatures, and in some books they were imaged as perverts low being, the mass media too had a great hand in reporting hatred punctuated and alienating stories about Jews and promoting anti-Semitism and race based intolerance against the Jewish immigrants, the conspiracy theory as well as other writings emerged at that time echoing the Hebrew-phobia and propagating Jewish hostility as well as anti-Semitic belief. "Anti-Semitism was especially virulent in the US from the late 1870s to World War II. This period was marked, inter alia, by Jews being restricted from living in certain places, being refused employment and entry into certain professions, being subject to quotas in universities –all at a time when influential anti-Semites had gained traction in public and corporate life." Anti-Semitism in the United States Report of an Expert Consultation Organized by AJC's Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights in Cooperation with UN Special Reporter on Freedom of Religion or Belief, (Dr. Ahmed Shaheed 10-11 April, 2019).

The Jewish attitude, observant culture, religion and ideology, the way they dressed and the way they operated within the American communities reason that made them subject to hatred and criticism, to popular prejudice and abhorrence, with the fact that they were a major reason in the German civil war was not hidden from the American public, the concept of election and the Jewish ethnocentricity and some if not all of their suspicious traditions contributed to the exclusion of the Jewish minority inside the American terra, In his book *whiteness of a different color*, Mathew Jacobson puts forth an explanation to the anatomy of race in American, after it was probed due to its increasing strike, he stated that civic assimilation happens not by nature force but with political and cultural pressure, he later on emphasized on how each, the host race, and the immigrant race see each other, for the Jewish

race, under the title: *looking like a Jew, seeing a Jew* the Jewish race “ebbed and flowed over time” Until the second half of the nineteenth century, however, it was generally not their "blood" but their religion that marked the Jews as a people apart. The Jew was the perpetual "Historical Outsider." (Jacobson. P.39)

As consequence, many Jews had no other solution but to dissolve their ethnicity into whiteness, a large chunk of the Jewish immigrants converted at least on a surface level, into secularism, the pressure of American anti-Semitism and the need to make fortune made acculturation an evitable outcome, the land of equality and freedom had no tolerance for the Jewish ingredient at that time, and the almost white Jewish immigrants were urged to assimilate, But even after the melting pot, Jews were still labeled as a threat, with inclining economic stress at that time, Jews crashed the American markets and took over important trading points, the Americans were sharply hostile to their Jewish coworkers, they often described their fashion as corrupted and twirling. And saw it was better for the American traits to stay Hebrew free, but shortly after World War II, anti-Semitism in America was noticeably reduced, seemingly the thump of pressure was removed and the index of abhorrence against Semitics was remarkably decreasing, meaning Jews did succeed becoming white but their whiteness remained relative.

Part two:

III. The tonal shifts in David/Cahan’s ideology and religion throughout the process of acculturation

1. Between a “fine Jew” and a “secular Jew

In his, *the rise of David Levinsky*, Cahan portrays his own migratory experience, as a young, orphan fellow, David, who sought immigration for economic survival, the chronicle drives out a common problematic amongst immigrants, which is the paradox of acculturation, the character undergoes an variety of dramatic, spiritual, political and economic drifts then

succeeds making good pennies and conquering the top of business with price of being deprived of his happiness.

Before America, David was depicted as typical Jewish boy, a disciplined Talmud student; being born into a religious atmosphere, at the last chapter of his first book, Cahan points at the fact, his mom assured he would get a strict and effective Talmudic education despite the fact she was financially incapable: “and she was going to make a “fine Jew” of me. Nor was she a rare exception in this respect, for there were hundreds of other poor families in our town who would starve themselves to keep their sons studying the Word of God” (p.19). Yong David was devoted to his Talmudic education he spent so much time and effort working on it was both a spiritual and a cultural condition for him, he drowned into the process, life revolved around the Jewish religion, describing his relation with his lord and abhorrence for evil Cahan states:

“My relations with God were of a personal and of a rather familiar character, He was interested in everything I did or said; He watched my every move or thought; He was always in heaven, yet, somehow, he was always near me, and I often spoke to Him as I might to Reb Sender I loved Him as one does a woman” (p.29).

“O Master of the World! Master of the Universe! I love you so! I would sigh. Oh, how I love you!” (p.29).

In the first pages of his book, Cahan describes religion and religious tasks, with enthusiasm and delight, he framed the protagonist as one passionate for his Talmud, one who preserved the Jewish observance physically and spiritually, “or hours and hours together I would sit at a gaunt reading-desk, swaying to and fro over some huge volume, reading its ancient text and interpreting it in Yiddish, All this I did aloud, in the peculiar Talmud singsong, a trace of which still persists in my intonation even when I talk cloaks and bank accounts and in English” (p.23) well, not quit a pious though, he sinned but often showed guilt afterwards, he would always perform his prayers in full piety and yearning, even after his mother’s death when Talmud did not seem as appealing as it was before, “I went to the

kitchen, where I washed my hands, and, while wiping them, muttered the brief prayer which one offers before eating.....Early the next morning, after I finished my long prayer and had put away my phylacteries...” (p.32) he communicates his feelings of guilt and the fear of his god’s punishment when making the least of sins “If I caught myself slurring over some of my prayers or speaking ill of another boy or telling a falsehood, I would say to Him, audibly: “Oh, forgive me once more, You know that I want to be good, I will be good I know I will. (abid.p. 29), “The relentless presence of Matilda in my mind worried me immeasurably, for to think of a woman who is a stranger to you is a sin” (p.62)

All the people Cahan interacted with were Jews (except for Matilda’s family), mostly observant, he was constantly influenced by those around him, Reb Sender and Naphtali with whom he often shared endless conversation over the Talmudic lessons and rabbinic tales, however, once, Naphtali went a little agnostic and throws David with a puzzling question which drilled him into rage, “Do you really think there is a God?” David answered: “You are a horrid atheist and a sinner in Israel; you are desecrating the holy place.” (page42) this conversation marked the relatively dogmatic view of David to his religion and broadened the ratio of David’s quality of Jewishness which also appeared in the way he described gentiles: “To me they were apostates, sinners in Israel” (p.33)

Following the loss of his mother, he seemed to be gathering arguments for all his forward actions, or better yet, excuses, After his conversation with Naphtali, David realizes that he cursed Naphtali for an “apostate” because he found nothing else to say it seemed as though he was saying that, despite his Talmudic knowledge, he could not come with one single utterance, a reason why he believed in the things he believed in, his reaction was similar to that of his ignorant old mother he described in a former chapter:

“His shocking whisper “Do you really think there is a God?” haunted me all that afternoon and evening, He appeared like another man to me, I was burning to see him

again and to smashes atheism, to prove to him that there was a God, But as I made mental rehearsal of my argument I realized that I had nothing clear or definite to put forth”(p.42).

The writer meant to portray David as a lost orphan, who knew little and endured much, to cast a hint on the fact that religion was only a social heritage to him, before he gets to learn its usage as he becomes older, wealthier, and unhappy. Simply put, he drilled that as to be the argument why he had given up on religion when he went did, on the same plate, David complains about how god has given up on him, he was left alone and he had no one to take care of him, “My communions with God were quite rare now, nor did He take as much interest in my studies as He used, Instead of the Divine Presence shining down on me while I read, the face of my martyred mother would loom before me”(p.42) along with his economical state and the famine he had endured, the unstable political state of Antomir, the threatening riots and the approaching exodus, his keenest curiosity, the self-shaming, and anti-Semitic/gentile abuse he went through because of his observant provocative look, all these motives worked as an introduction for the new phase of change Cahan/David went through.

“The United States lured me not merely as a land of milk and honey, but also, and perhaps chiefly, as one of mystery, of fantastic experiences, of marvelous transformations. To leave my native place and to seek my fortune in that distant, weird world seemed to be just the kind of sensational adventure my heart was hankering for” (p.47)

When I unburdened myself of my project to Reb Sender he was thunderstruck “To America!” he said, Lord of the World! But one becomes a Gentile there” Not at all,” I sought to reassure him. ”There are lots of good Jews there, and they don’t neglect their Talmud, either.”(abid.p.47)

With the help of Matilda, David succeeds getting himself in a ship for his trip, from a religious small town at the very east of the world, to a big city in the in the heart of the new world, on his way there, David made sure to perform all his prayers, “In my devotions, which I performed three times a day, without counting a benediction before every meal and every

drink of water, grace after every meal and a prayer before going to sleep, I would mentally plead for the safety of the ship and for a speedy sight of land”(p.62), he was still a “queer fellow”, when he gets to the American shores, the first thing he notices is the inhospitality of the American police officers, they obviously do not favor his Jewish look, “these unfriendly voices flavored all America with a spirit of icy inhospitality that sent a chill through my very soul.” The first words David heard were “greenhorn” or “green one” an intolerance-punctuated expressions used to describe his old Jewish style, those expressions made him feel inferior and unwelcomed, apparently his fear of being stigmatized pushed him towards the inevitable fate of an immigrant like himself, assimilation.

“It isn’t Russia,” he said, with a sigh. ”Judaism has not much of a chance here.”72

“Can’t a fellow be a good Jew in America?” David protests

“Yes, of course he can, but—well, wait till you see for yourself.” The lady at the grocery store answers” (p.70)

“It isn’t Russia, he said, with a sigh; Judaism has not much of a chance here.” (p.72)

Levinsky did not seem to have any clear intentions to drop his Jewish look, yet Mr. Even, a nice man he met at the synagogue helped him get rid of it, as he secretes him a month-paid apartment, and helps him become a peddler with condition he doesn’t neglect his Talmud “one must be presentable in America.” Mr. even said, as he quotes Talmud an equivalent to the saying that one must do in Rome as the Romans do”, “Give him a hair-cut and a bath, he said to the proprietor. Cut off his side-locks while you are at it, one may go without them and yet be a good Jew” (p.76). David was really grateful, he made a promise to god he would be a good man despite the destructions that might emerge in a country like America: “I shall be more pious than ever, I promise you, even if America is a godless country” (p.75) but after a short time he realized that he really was under control of the new world effect of which he can’t break free, he puts forth:

“If you are a Jew of the type to which I belonged when I came to New York and you attempt to bend your religion to the spirit of your new surroundings, it breaks. It falls to pieces. The very clothes I wore and the very food I ate had a fatal effect on my religious habits. A whole book could be written on the influence of a starched collar and a necktie on a man who was brought up as I was” (p.84)

After few months, David gave religious devotion to secular education and neglected Talmud, and he stops visiting the synagogue, seldom spoke about religion, and he allowed himself to drown in sins, ignoring the sense of guilt and disgust:

“My old religion had gradually fallen to pieces, and if its place was taken by something else, if there was something that appealed to the better man in me, to what was purest in my thoughts and most sacred in my emotions, that something was the red, church-like structure on the southeast corner of Lexington Avenue and Twenty-third Street” (p.130-140) (he was describing university)

“Intoxicated by the novelty of yielding to Satan, I gave him a free hand and the result was months of debauchery and self-disgust. The underworld women I met, the humdrum filth of their life, and their matter-of-fact, business-like attitude toward it never ceased to shock and repel me. I never left a creature of this kind without abominating her and myself, yet I would soon, sometimes during the very same evening, call on her again or on some other woman of her class” (p.93).

Levinsky, became fully American, he drowned in the process of making pennies, and oriented his devotion and energy into learning English and secular knowledge he rather thought of as superior and of high quality, he was into it so much that he had no time to think of God, his creed dissolved into the law of the fittest, he explicitly declares his integration in the American society, in a godless country, David levinsky became a secular Jew, when he finally had everything a man dreams off, he discovers that a part of his unhappiness was the fact that he left his religion that gave him spiritual comfort and chased material things.

My past and my present do not comport well. David, the poor lad swinging “over a Talmud volume at the Preacher’s Synagogue, seems to have more in common with my inner identity than David Levinsky, the well-known cloak-manufacturer (p.421)

3. Between Communism and Capitalism

David hiked in a spiral path between the two atmospheres, that of Russia, and that of America in separate terms, back in Russia David was a Talmudic student, he was raised in a communist/socialist scope, and he had no intentions to work or to make a “Wealthy-man” out of himself, his mother took care of his financial needs, but after her death, he was left to benefit other people’s charity, it’s when the idea of immigration came to visit his mind.

When he got to the American shores, the first thing he heard, was this is not Russia

“If a fellow isn’t lazy nor a fool he has no reason to be sorry he came to America. It’ll be all right.” (p.68),

“One does not sleep in an American synagogue,” he said. ”It is not Russia.” Then, scanning me once more, he added, with an air of compassionate perplexity: ”Where will you sleep, poor child? I wish I could take you to my house, but—well, America is not Russia. There is no pity here, no hospitality. My wife would raise a rumpus if I brought you along.” (p.72)

David was lucky to find help as aforementioned and as a start he worked a peddler, but his mind set was not yet reasoning the idea of capitalism and the American liberalism, by coming to America, he sought secular education, he wanted to become an intellectual man.

“America is not Russia,” his landlady said “A man must make a living here.” (p.73)

“There is no can’t in America, the man by my side returned, with a sage smile.” (p.99)

The writer communicates the differences between the two countries on the tongues of many characters David encountered on the American soil, at first he did not comprehend what they were saying, seemingly his thirst for knowledge blinded him, but then he adopted the social Darwinism as a new creed and gradually, but not fully, became a capitalist, he then went on chasing his fortune in delight.

“I must confess, too, that the defeat with which I had met at Tevkin’s house had greatly intensified my hostility to socialists, as I have remarked in a previous chapter, I ascribed my fiasco to the socialist atmosphere that surrounded Anna. I was embittered the socialists were constantly harping on “class struggle,” “class antagonism,” “class psychology.” I would dismiss it all as absurd but I did hate the trade-unions, particularly those of the East side altogether there was too much socialism among the masses of the Ghetto.” (p.412)

As a capitalist, his view for the world changed, He showed admiration for the American virtue, abhorred socialism, looked down at poor people and thought of them as absent minded people who did not know how to get them self into the tope the way he did. After achieving wealth, David finds himself in a state of nostalgia for the socialist scope he once belonged to.

“Socialism, which used to be declared utterly un-American, had come to be almost a vogue. American colleges were leavened with it, while American magazines were building up stipend do us circulations by exposing the corruption of the mighty. Public opinion had, during the past two decades, undergone a striking change in this respect. I had watched that change and I could not but be influenced by it.” (p.411)

“For all my theorizing about the ”survival of the fittest” and the ”dying off of the weaklings,” I could not help feeling that, in an abstract way, the socialists were not altogether wrong.” (abid.p.411)

IV. The Intra-Psychic Use of Jewish Identity in the Avenue of David

1. Significance of the Name David in “the Rise of David Levinsky”

From the Hebrew name [דָּוִד](#) (*Dawid*), which was derived from Hebrew [דָּוִד](#) (*dod*) meaning "beloved" or "uncle" [behindthename.com](#). The name David would’ve seemed relatively random at first glance, until one realizes the importance of this name for the Jewish people:

“**David**, (flourished c. 1000 bc), second [king](#) of ancient [Israel](#). He founded the Judean [dynasty](#) and united all the tribes of Israel under a single monarch. His son [Solomon](#) expanded the empire that David built. David is an important figure in [Judaism](#), [Christianity](#), and [Islam](#)” [the britannica.com](#)

As explained in the quote above, David was an important brick in the Jewish history, the founder of the Jewish monarchy and the one who reunified the Jewish tribe, this drills one to think that Cahan was quiet intentional with this name, the story of king David is also not so different than that of our protagonist, in fact David was a shepherd who later on became king.. By looking at these facts aliened, we could derive one of several themes encompassed within this literary work: “from rags to riches”. David was not only the protagonist to this story but also the center of it, his psyche was the moral of the story form departure to ending, another thing to point at observing the title of Cahan’s novel is the word “rise”, the literal meaning is familiar to pretty much all of us To rise is a dynamic verb, meaning, to move from a lower position to a higher one, but what about the meta-meaning? in other words; what rises is that which previously fell, David’s Jewish identity falls while he was busy chasing pennies, he thought that making himself look like an American wealthy man would cease the feeling of self disgust that exhausted his soul, that it would make him happier, yet at the end of his novel, he realized, that he was happier as that Talmudic student he was before America.

The salient question of identity still scrambles to appeal at least an ultimate retort that may lead to a final and firm closure to the matter of racial conflict, and thus to gain the ability to practice religion at a broader extent of freedom. The imaginarieness of this scene in America, willbring about a great self-conflict in defense of hybridism and degeneration of one’s identity, or the conversion to the option of assimilation and indulgence which is sometimes inevitable, but does this mean the original identity in such a case, would dissolve entirely? Through David’s monologues and equally, through the biography of Abraham, we are to trace the behavior of identity on the godless land and under secular pressure. However, we are to elucidate the ways, David’s psyche was designed, his unconscious, and his Id, for it is the manner that would render the pattern in which his identity rose and fell in the entity of Cahan’s work.

The struggle is birthed when David comes ashore to the American soil, he confronts with the ideological difference between the two countries at once, in fact, the depth of the gulf does pull him to question his entire decision of immigration, yet, he tries to make-do with what surrounds him; “The harsh manner of the immigration officers was a grievous surprise to me”(abid, p.65), all David’s assumptions about the land of freedom were weak-kneed and tremulous at once:

“As contrasted with the officials of my despotic country, those of a republic had been portrayed in my mind as paragons of refinement and cordiality. My anticipations were rudely belied. ”They are not a bit better than Cossacks” (abid, p.65),

Actually, David’s inner monologues, and also his actions and beliefs, at this very particularly period of his life, perform a strong presentation of his identity, even during the times he abandoned it most it was yet, much alive and unforgotten.

David surrenders to the “deterministic need to change”, at the very day he lands in America, the change starts at his physical appearance “Give him a hair-cut and a bath,” he said to the proprietor. “Cut off his side-locks while you are at it...” at this moment, David senses the slippage he got in to, and he feels a bit put out, and consumed by discomfort, only the man rushes out to shelter him and make him feel secure; “One may go without them and yet be a good Jew” (Abid, p.76), David felt alert and threatened with the demise of his identity, the sentence “and yet be a good Jew” was the bliss he craved, as if he was given the freedom to be one, Mr. Even will continue to comfort him using a higher authority; “one must do in Rome as the Romans do.”(Abid, p.76) as an equivalent to a verse in Talmud. Later on the story, one could see clear, that David might have over-absorbed this notion until he finally become a veritable gentile, as most of Jews in a America, he neglected his Talmud and his prayers, he even stopped believing in the existence of God. Something he said he

would never indulge into back at his time in Russia as he reveal his avenue to two of his best friends, on the one hand, Rib Sender:

”To America!” he said. ”Lord of the World! But one becomes a gentile there.

Not at all,” I sought to reassure him. ”There are lots of good Jews

There, and they don’t neglect their Talmud, either.”(Abid, p.47)

the significance of this character, lies on the very origin of the name, that is borrowed from a well known moral persona in Jewish history, the character’s life represents three main qualities of the Jewish man of religion, the man of a humble, generous, and a god-fearing psyche, he is then, Cahan’s ideal projection of the fine Jew, he is in all his actions, David’s sacristy for Jewish identity, he is thus Cahan’s self-portrait of superego.

Next time David would reveal his project to Naphtali, who was to him the talented Jack of all trades:

-“Not a bad idea, he said, but you will never raise the money. You
Are a master of dreams, David.”

-“I’ll get the money, and, what is more, when I am in America I
Shall bring you over there, too.”

-“May your words pass from your lips into the ear of God.”

-“I thought you did not believe in God.”

-“How long will you believe in Him after you get to America?” (Abid, p.47)

On the other hand, Naphtali was nothing like Reb Sender, he was rather normal and had no sentiment towards religion, he also disbelieved in the existence of God as will be discussed in the later part, the name Naphtali has a greater meaning in Jewish religion, he is the sixth son of Joshua, founder of the Naphtali tribe, who would take over Canaan after

Moses, but the identity of this former ends up lost, and demised. Naphtali the metafictional character then, presents the religious doubts and relativity of belief David/Cahan, had in his virtue but continued on denying, he draws the fact that religion to David is more of a cultural practice which may or may not dissolve if taken out of its religious lexicon. Naphtali is the metamorphosis of David's identity that Cahan would portray excellently when he puts in his mouth the surprising question that David never dared to answer "How long will you believe in Him after you get to America?" at this very moment, Naphtali represents the death of belief and identity, and the deficit of conviction and the ultimate unbreakable credence David thought he had, Naphtali on this very hand, is the psychic Id of Cahan's projected piece of mind in the work.

The two previous characters do compact their third in a suitable fashion, David, Naphtali, and Reb Sender altogether are the full-fledged description of Cahan's genius. David, his ego, and Naphtali, the Id, are Cahan's voices of inner conflict, they overlap around the truth of belief, inner doubts and unconventional half explained truths, Cahan fails to answer Naphtali's question, or rather keeps silence because he did believe in the inevitable need to change since ever: Life was devoid of savor, and I was thirsting for an appetizer, as it were, for some violent change, for piquant sensations. Then it was that the word America first caught my fancy" (p.76). he did murmur a lot about the way America's force-feed change was of a special attraction to his soul;

"The United States lured me not merely as a land of milk and honey, but also, and perhaps chiefly, as one of mystery, of fantastic experiences, of marvelous transformations. To leave my native place and to seek my fortune in that distant, weird world seemed to be just the kind of sensational adventure my heart was hankering for" (p.47)

He even embodies this need in his conversations with Matilda, Cahan admits his hatred for the observant appearance, and the way he dressed, his side-locks and the suffocating commitment to study Talmud among all sciences of the world, he wished to learn Russian, and to read gentile books, he felt an imponderable hanger to be an educated man like Matilda wanted him to be, somehow, he sought that his brightness is much more than to be trapped in the Jewish pursuit of living. He was much more than a man of religion.

“Come, don’t be angry, I want to talk to you, look here. Is there any sense in your wasting your life the way you do. Why, mother says you are remarkably bright. Isn’t it a pity that you should throw it all away? Why don’t you try to study Russian, geography, history? Why don’t you try to become an educated man?”(p.53)

David’s previous conversations with Matilda did not stay in Russia, this very advice, was still stuck in ear after years of living in America;“Why could I not do the same? I pictured myself working and studying and saving money for the kind of education which Matilda had dinned into my ears”(p.114)

Matilda was the shame he sensed in the eyes of gentiles, the hatred he carried to his own kinship, he drops a clue to this, saying; “My unhappy love never ceased to harrow me. The stern image of Matilda blended with the hostile glamour of America (p.64). Somehow, Cahan used the character to affirm on the right of whites and gentiles to look at him in hatred and disgust because he looked the way he looked, and acted the way he did. Matilda was the first thought he had in mind when was just about to abandon the side-locks and the observant fashion, as he reveals in a rather direct fashion:

“I was mentally parading my ”modern” make-up before Matilda. A pang of yearning clutched my heart. It was a momentary feeling .For the rest, I was all in a flutter with embarrassment and a novel relish of existence”(p.76)

4. Cultural practices and hereditary behavior:

David worked hard to turn himself into an “American nobleman”

Accordingly, I never did so without being conscious of my gestures and trying to make them as “American” as possible” (p.255)

“Are you a Russian?” he asked «I used to be,” I answered, with a smile. ”I am an American now.”(p.265)

as already mentioned, he was a row ambitious person, which is a common Jewish trait, say, a cultural behavior, he did all he could, sacrificed both his principles and religion and relied on the “survival of the fittest” to fill his pockets, though was Americanized, David still showed some behaviors that were said to be relatively Jewish, such as envy, which he showed when he was still in Antomir : “The sight of him as I be held him coming toward me gave me a pang of envy” (p.274), he also kept some of his “Talmudic gesticulations” as he calls them:

“One of the things about which he often made fun of me was my Talmud gesticulations, a habit that worried me like a physical defect. It was so distressingly un-American. I struggled hard against it. I had made efforts to speak with my hands in my pockets; I had devised other means for keeping them from participating in my speech. All of no avail. I still gesticulate great deal, though much less than I used to.” (p.256)

The Jewish identity cuts to the very heart of David’s actions, the structure of his vision, his ideals, and his conventions, they are all, nonetheless Jewish, it shows presence in the every atom that constructs his ideologies, and his virtue, he is at large, a Jew in the brain. He went to the godless land as Jew and he came out a Jew, David’s jewishness walks aside all his decisions in the Americas, even his marriage, or in better words, the failure of that later, was of Jewish reasons: “I saw clearly that it would be a mistake. It was not the faith of my father’s that was in the way. It was that medieval prejudice against our people which makes so many marriages between Jew and Gentile a failure. It frightened me” (p.419)

To say it all, Jewish identity persisted the assimilation process and all the secular mutations; David did not seem to be any happier as a melting ethno, he constantly expressed his nostalgia for the Talmudic student he was, In fact the pathos with-driven by his novel, was not sent to all readers whom would feel compassion and pity for the Jewish struggle of recognition, but for those of a likewise Jewish identity, it does the coded truth that there is nothing that shall make a Jew happy but his preserved Jewishness, this is the major theme that constructs the entity of the story, the slippage David realized he fell into is what made his rise later on. Cahan wants to portrait the degeneration a Jew would undergo when he skinned David out of his jewishness, then again portraits his “Rise” when at the very top of his success he longed the most to the rag Jew he once was.

Conclusion:

Through his *The Rise Of David Levinsky*, Cahan communicates his theory that success is about one’s spiritual well being and not about his material status, a prolongation of the famous “money does not buy happiness”, David did not seem to like the life he sewed for himself, suits, neckties and that nobleman fashion weren’t enough to make him feel happy, not as he felt within the cop and side-locks of the Jewish Talmudic student, his identity remained the same despite the dramatic change he undergone, however, the pathos with-driven seems a little inter-subjective, inter-Jewish, it seems as though Cahan wrote this novel, not only to portray an immigrant’s experience, but to worn Jewish immigrant in specific terms, from the coasts of assimilation, and self melting with an atmosphere like Americas, as much as this chapter answered questions, more questions seem to rise on the real purpose behind Cahan’s *The Rise Of David Levinsky*.

Chapter three

The Jewish Diaspora and the Perception of the American Dream.

*The American dream in Abraham Cahan perception,
A reality or a myth!*

Introduction

The last chapter deals the essence of the concept of the American dream perceived by Abraham Cahan and as well by the different minorities among them the Jewish minority; a minority that made it through in America, how the Jews writers mainly the father of Jewish literature Abraham Cahan who sought refuge in a new place, coped after the arrival. This chapter is produced using autobiographical approach, in reference of Cahan's conscious and his interaction with his inner self, the effect of the new life experience on the past. It also tackled the ambivalent attitude possessed by the protagonists when discovering their new home, the question being asked here is whether the concept of the American dream a reality or a myth?

Section One: The American Dream / Diaspora

“For that is what America is all about. It is the uncrossed desert and the unclimbed bridge. It is the star that is not reached and the harvest that is sleeping in the unplowed ground” (Yndon B. Johnson. from his Presidential Inaugural Address, January 20, 1965)

When we come to describe the essence of the American soil, the prosperity that attracted people to its lands, the freedom they believed it is equally shared among racial and ethnic races, We refer directly to what defines its essence and origin which is the concept of the American dream. When uttering the word “American dream” one questions whether it is a myth or reality! Is it a nightmare than a dream! Or is it only an ideology! And can it be accomplished or it remains only a DREAM.

“There are those who will say that the liberation of humanity, the freedom of man and mind is nothing but a dream. They are right. It is the American Dream.” (Archibald MacLeish)

“The American dream reminds us that every man is heir to the legacy of worthiness.”(Martin Luther king) martin Luther king hoped for equality for all in American lands and that no one would suffer no matter of his origin or where he came from

I look forward confidently to the day when all who work for a living will be one with no thought to their separateness as Negroes, Jews, Italians or any other distinctions. This will be the day when we bring into full realization the American dream -- a dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where men will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines ~Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Many historians, writers, singers, politicians, and influencers around the world who dealt with the so called “the western dream” believed that the American soil for centuries and generations has presented itself as this shining 'city upon a hill', the exceptional, wonderful, and far reaching, it has served as a map and taken as a destination to those willing to accomplish life ambitions and enjoy the freedom they believed it existed in The skies of America. Regardless of life circumstances, as Neil Patrick Harris stated “sometimes you can have the smallest role in the smallest production and still have a huge impact.” The term came to be known after the economical crises America experienced during the twentieth century, this dream came as consolation to give a sense of confidence to the American people that this rough period is a matter of a short time and it will be over sooner or later. Martin Luther, the activist and the leader of the civil rights movement and the one who stood against segregation and confronted all kinds of physical and psychological manipulation against the black race, he was among those who left an echo in the hearts of millions of Americans. he stated “the American dream reminds us that every man is heir to the legacy of worthiness.” thus, for him the American dream is still alive out there, hard work will get you there, that the one does not necessarily need to be white, rich, of superior race or have a high degree of education to attain the dream. For him, It can be maintained and done with a simple idea, hard work and

determination. However, the fact that many were and still struggle to earn a living proves that Americans and even non-natives whom they shaped the melting pot, as well as immigrants are blinded by this myth the moment it started.

Many works that contained this aspect of the American dream were tremendously introduced to the world of literature, art, theatre, music and started to leave a trace concerning that, which lead millions to migrate and travel to live the prosperous life they dreamt of. Among these influential works is a song written by **Katharine Lee Bates** in 1972 and sung by **Ray Charles**. It is named “**America the beautiful**” which was an American patriotic song. this song was about a very dark day in USA against the British colonialism which many believed the song should be the Anthem, for it reminds them of the dead soldiers and the blood was shed for the country, it was performed years after by many singers and bands in churches, classrooms and patriotic festivals such as the ‘**D-Day**’ and many more. For the tragic history it carries within its lyrics, the root of the song was when the writer Katharine Lee Bates was inspired of the natural beauty of America she has seen valuing the vast beauty of the country. Clearly there is something special about America to everyone, for it captures beauty about the place itself in which all people desire to permanently go there. Hence, To honor this valuable vision she composes a poem to be turned into a song that grew vastly over the first half of the 20th century. Despite its greatness can these highly latter assumptions about America be true and reflect the real America nowadays?

America experienced several events that happened over the last few years and have shown that America nowadays is a nightmare than a dream; the dream has come to an end for many minorities and ethnic groups who struggled under the brutality of authorities among them the African-Americans, the physical violence by policemen against those who have no voice, or to say they were forced to remain silent for their lives. Racism, sexism, brutality, and

segregation become a chronic disease of the American society and are famous words every man uttered in these periods during the 20th century. “Europe comes to represent the intellectual, the spiritual, and the creative landscape, whereas America is at best the scene of economic success. Cahan, like Henry James and William Dean Howells, was writing "international" fiction.” (*Abraham Cahan a neglected realist*, P36)

Literature in America is not only formed by original production or genre of that land, but also shaped by different ethnical writings that dealt with the treatment of immigrant themes written by individuals who experienced radical change and faced self quarrel in accommodating in the new environment. (Andrea Verschaeve, *The Jewish Immigrant Perception of the American Dream In Abraham Cahan 's Yekl and Anzia Yezierska 's Bread Givers*, P7)

Abraham Cahan, the heart of Jewish production in new York, his writings tackled the discovery of many valuable element that was present in every immigrant intellectual piece, which is the concept of the American dream; the Accomplishments and journeys he experienced in the lands every man sought refuge in. the essence of this worldwide concept was presented in his short stories and autobiographical novels, among them the two novels “*The Rise of David Levinsky*”, “*Yeki; a tale of the new York ghetto*” whom he wrote sharing and narrating the moments and journeys he went through as a new arrival till the years being a citizen in America. When digging int Cahan’s writings and analyzing his sayings, passages, psyche, thoughts, within the novels we realize that he always succeeded in convincing the readers and audience that his ghetto and sufferance are a reality.

[...] Abraham Cahan modified the convention of happy endings and poetic justice. He created complex characters, heroes not wholly admirable and villains not without charm. He employed the international theme, expressed an interest in social and political issues, and experimented with point of view as well as vernacular, colloquial, and dialectal speech. He focused upon

commonplace characters in a contemporary setting, and his tone was frequently comic. (Joan Zlotnick, *Abraham Cahan, a Neglected Realist*, P34)

The presence of the American dream appears everywhere and in every line you read hits you with the sensation of the nature of the dream, it exists mainly in his first novel that was *Yekl*, when Yekl decided to change his name to Jake and divorce his wife to be a single and a free lad who can commit any sort of work without being restricted neither by the traditional marriage nor by conventions of his homeland. Abraham Cahan reveals his self and nature through his characters; he presents the characters as pitiful and attractive despite their worst deeds. They are victimized by American identity “We feel sorry for Yekl, who is, after all, America's victim. We even pity David Levinsky, who is more of a villain than Yekl.”

“I am an *American feller*, a Yankee--that's what I am. What punishment is due me, then, if I cannot stand a *shnooza* like her. It is *nuushed* ; I cannot live with her, even if she stand with one foot on heaven and one foot on earth. Let her take everything-with a wave at the household effects and I shall pay her as much cash as she asks- I am willing to break stones to pay her-provided she agrees to a divorce.” (p. 149)

Abraham Cahan was a writer to remember, and a author who left the traces of his outstanding production in the books of history, from an immigrant lad to the father of Jewish-American literature of the late 19th and 20th century. In his writings he is always stating that The time for Europe is over, and the time of America has started. This movement encouraged him to claim so under the name of achieving the dream.

The difficulty faced by the Jews to make use of their past and their future as individuals who worth the good and valuable life existed in the literature they produced in America, t the turn of the century they started to address the theme of the American dream (Andrea Verschaeve, *The Jewish Immigrant Perception of the American Dream In Abraham Cahan's Yekl and Anzia Yezierska's Bread Givers*, P8)

Abraham Cahan in the opening of the novel “the Rise of David Levinsky” reflected his own self through the protagonist David, the way he remembers how he was and how he turned to be surprises him. The struggle between the past and the present in America, in which he stated the fact that he was poor and suffered from the lowest of poverty, however, when he set foot on America his future started to shine and light won against the darkness of his sufferings, in which he become a great writer and a potential realist who spoke on behalf of many Jews, he delieverd the message to the world through his writings as well as through *the daily forward magazine*, that was a tool assisted him to shine and rise in the land of others.

When I think of my past in a superficial, casual way, the metamorphosis I have gone through strikes me as nothing short of a miracle. I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America in 1885_ with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars and recognized as one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade in the United States (the Rise of David Levinsky, P3)

The motive that led Abraham Cahan to consider America as a shelter was the fact that he did not have the right to learn in a religious school as his mother wanted saying she wanted to make him learn the word of God and memorize the Talmud, however, just because he was poor and his mother could not afford the money to pay took away the hope to consider his land a home. That sufferance was a painful memory to him. After, he realized that America is the land of knowledge and intellectual life. Furthermore, he was a fan of English language writings since childhood; he was thirsty to see himself write in English, he thrived to write in that precious language he called a language of civilization and beauty. He was envying his friends at school when they raise a pen and write the word of God. This passion of writing encouraged him to dream: Abraham Cahan was a dreamer “I was a great dreamer of day dreams.” (P5)

I seized every opportunity to watch the boys write and would practice the art, with chalk, on my mother's table or bed, on the door of our basement room, on

many a gate or fence. Sometimes a boy would let me write a line or two in his copy- PAGE12

In his famous novel *Yeki*, he hoped and worked for the freedom to achieve the American dream, in addition to financial independence, thus, he will be loved and respected. Only through education he can fulfill his personal dreams and get rid of the past.

According to Sara Smolinsky, it is through education and love she can reach her fulfillment and goals. "She finds through the course of her search for the American dream that it is only through embracing her past and adopting the old world to the new that she will finally be able to make for herself a person." (Andrea Verschaeve, *The Jewish Immigrant Perception of the American Dream In Abraham Cahan's Yekl and Anzia Yezierska's Bread Givers*, P11)

The quarrel between religion and the self was over for David, the passion of learning the word of God and the Talmud was no longer his interests, and he realized that he cannot afford a good living unless he moves to America. As every man who seeks refuge in foreign lands, Cahan experienced a sense of loneliness and acculturation despite of his admiration to American culture and the impact of social and economic force and power that drove the one who get rid of religion and personal values. His needs were fulfilled; he filled his hunger of knowledge and prosperity. His novels have a sense of loneliness and nostalgia to the past.

I applied myself to my task with ardor, but it did not last long. My former interest in the Talmud was gone. The spell was broken irretrievably. Now that I did not want for food, my sense of loneliness became keener than ever. Indeed, it was a novel sense of loneliness, quite unlike the one I had experienced before. My surroundings had somehow lost their former meaning. Life was devoid of savor, and I was thirsting for an appetizer, as it were, for some violent change, for piquant sensations. (P 33)

COULD scarcely think of anything but America. I read every letter from there that I could obtain. I was constantly seeking information about the country and the opportunities it held out to a man of my type, and cudgeling my brains for some way of scraping together the formidable sum. (P35)

Abraham Cahan was captured by the beauty of the land, when he set foot on it he visited all places including bookstores, museums, political places, synagogues... he was discovering places and meeting new people and making acquaintances with them to feel at home and convince himself that his assumption of America is not wrong or in vain.

The name was buzzing all around me. The great emigration of Jews to the United States, which had received its first impulse two or three years before, was already in full swing. It may not be out of order to relate, briefly. How it had all come about P33

Jewish people consider family as an important part of everyone's life, they find it difficult to move or seek life elsewhere than their homelands.

Howe and Greenberg stated that:

The family has given its children emotional resources; to have grown in a Jewish family is to be persuaded that family is an institution of one's identity and culture. The family becomes an obsessive presence and one of significance to the Jewish people, which gives them a sense of regret if they live their lands. (*the Jewish immigrant perception of the American dream in Abraham Cahan's Yeki and Anzia Yezierska's Bread Giver*,P12)

In Yeki Jake rejected his family and divorced his wife, in doing so he lost the significance of his identity in seeking the American dream. He did not care about losing it, as long as he maintains the dream. There existed many writers who praised and criticized Cahan's writings in America. Leslie Fiedler says that: "the fiction of Abraham Cahan appears in retrospect, not merely to fall short of final excellence, but to remain somehow irrelevant to the main lines of development of fiction in the United States" (P13).

Most Russian Jews settled in the Russian empire, they were legally restricted in the pale of settlement, they were factory workers and farmers, and this life was not of their choice, thus, after the Russian revolution and the freedom it brought, Jewish politics and new emergence of Jewish life started. Afterwards, they desired to use this freedom and escape Russia to a new home

Over five million people were suddenly made to realize that their birthplace was not their home (a feeling which the Great Russian revolution has suddenly changed). Then it was that the cry "To America!" was raised. It spread like wild-fire, even over those parts of the Pale of Jewish Settlement which lay outside the riot zone This was the beginning of the great New Exodus that has been in progress for decades P34

No ethnic group has succeeded to make it through in America, but the Jews. Were they successful because of their origin as European ethnic group or because of the suitable circumstances that paved the way for their survival? And can they accomplish and flourish more in the nation. Eastern European Jewish immigrants to traveled to new world brought with them cultural cargo shaped by the *shtetl*. The assumption that immigrants from Russia were well prepared for labor in a modern industrial economy and the question of relationship between economic performance and cultural characteristics. (Adam. D. Mendelsohn, *the rage race*, P12) an experience from rage to riches

In the process of discovering the new world, Abraham Cahan considered America as a fantasy and mystery to be discovered, for him it was a land of milk and honey, he experienced the process of transformation only when he moved and left his past and native lands behind seeking fortune abroad. It was an adventure he wanted since his childhood and as a passionate lad.

The United States lured me not merely as a land of milk and honey, but also, and perhaps chiefly, as one of mystery, of fantastic experiences, of marvelous transformations. To leave my native place and to seek my fortune in that

distant, weird world seemed to be just the kind of sensational adventure my heart was hankering for. P34

When he reached his goals and achieved the impossible, afterwards he started to feel nostalgic and have a sense of homesickness, his enthusiasm of the new life started to vanish. Despite he felt homesick and lonely as every new arrival and immigrant who experiences culture shock as well as a feeling of regret. the ocean frightened him, The sounds of the waves brought him a feeling of anxiety and uncertainty of his future in the land he sought, "The active life of the great strange city made me feel like one abandoned in the midst of a jungle. " (P47). he started to speak to himself and having thoughts of regret leaving his home. Yet, the thought that America was a great place to live in was always encouraging him forward:

"This, then, is America!" I exclaimed, mutely. The notion of something enchanted which the name had always evoked in me now seemed fully borne out p46

TWO weeks later I was one of a multitude of steerage passengers on a Bremen steamship on my way to New York. Who can depict the feeling of desolation, homesickness, uncertainty, and anxiety with which an emigrant makes his first voyage across the ocean? I proved to be a good sailor, but the sea frightened me. The thumping of the engines was drumming a ghastly accompaniment to the awesome whisper of the waves. I felt in the embrace of a vast, uncanny force. And echoing through it all were the heart-lashing words: "Are you crazy? You forget your place, young man!". (P 45)

Many of the letters that came from the United States to my birthplace before I sailed had contained a warning not to imagine that America was a "land of gold" and that treasure might be had in the streets of New York for the picking. But these warnings only had the effect of lending vividness to my image of an American street as a thoroughfare strewn with nuggets of the precious metal. Symbolically speaking, this was the idea one had of the "land of Columbus." It was a continuation of the widespread effect produced by stories of Cortes and Pizarro in the sixteenth century, confirmed by the successes of some Russian emigrants of my time. (P50)

The word Diaspora have a broad meaning in research studies, it refers to any social group being dispersed from their homelands to another land, the movement and migration

from the native land. The Jews living in America are diasporic individuals who are westernized to hold an American identity.

"There's nothing more true in being a child of a Diaspora, a child of immigrants. We're completely new to our parents. We're not something they can ever understand. And it's not as if we are ever going to be accepted. We're accepted as long as we conform to what we are expected to be, and I'm sure that's not any different for anyone else." ~ Junot Diaz

Section Two: The Parasitic Attitude of the Jewish “David”

1- The notion of Parasite and Parasitism

a- Parasite:

As defined in oxford dictionary: it dates back to Mid-16th century via Latin from Greek parasitos “(person) eating at another's table”, from para- “alongside” + sitos “food”.

1-An organism that lives in or on an organism of another species (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the other's expense.

2-derogatory: A person who habitually relies on or exploits others and gives nothing in return.

As Eustace Mullins defines it “a parasite is one who is disliked, who feeds at the expense of another, and who lives in or upon another organism which is called the host. We also find that the term can be applied to a person whose life follows the classic life pattern of the parasite”

(the biological Jew, P: 1)

b- Parasitism:

Parasitism is defined as the tendency of an organism to fully depend on another organism in terms of habitat and nutrition, it is an assemblage of two creators with one (the parasite) dependent on the other (the host), In a social context, parasitism can be used to describe a person or a group of people who cannot survive without the help of others, the words parasitism and profitage can be used interchangeably in some contexts:

“Parasitism is one of those aspects of biology and in particular ecology, which deals with the relationship of organisms to one another and to their habitat. Parasitism involves an association between animals of different species where

one, the host, is indispensable to the other, the parasite; while the host can quite well do without the parasite. In other words Parasitism is a hetero specific type of an association between two individuals in which one of the partners called parasite is metabolically dependent on another referred to as host” (Raja Fayaz Ali, host-parasite relationships P:1)

c- Parasitic Jews:

Is a notion that describes Jews of the diaspora as a race that dependson other races “The Jewish-Semitic raceis shown as a parasitic race; its members are parasites who can only continue to live at the expense or their hosts”in his book *The Passing of the Great Race*, 1916, Madison Grantdescribes Jews as ratsfor their parasitic attitude, Jews are a dependent race, they live and thrive on the possessions of others , being a non-productive race is the thing that made them subject to many exiles specially on socialist soils, due to the firm socialist ideology that abhors parasites :

The Jew, decried since the middle Ages as a blood sucker and exploiter of his "host nation", then made to bear the added burden of the odium of capitalism, always and everywhere regarded as an alien and belonging. According to the race theory of the anti-Semites, to an inferior un-productive race -who else would fit the descriptive term “parasite” better? Indeed, the biological definition seems in this case so fitting that it might have been specially made to measure! (Alex bein,*the Jewish Parasite* P: 10)

In his book *The Biological Jew*, Eustace Mullinscarried out similarities between the parasitic life pattern and the Jewish attitude:

1. A parasite searches for a healthy organism as a feeding ground.
2. The parasite's life cycle depends upon its finding a host.
3. A healthy organism which is invaded by a parasitic organism is inevitably injured and often dies from the evil effect of the parasitic presence.

Juxtaposed with one fatal criterion of parasites which is “the ability to modify”: “It has exhibited an amazing ability to change or to modify itself in order to achieve its parasitic goal.

It has developed extremely refined techniques for remaining upon the host, and sophisticated methods of continuing to feed at the host's expense. It has adopted many guises, and it has shown a tremendous amount of adaptability for appearing in various forms, in order to remain in place.” (P: 3)

d- Parasitic David

Following the death of his mother, David did not take a stance to provide himself food and habitat, he took refuge in the synagogue depending on people's charity and donations and he merely survived by the help of his teacher Reb Sender and Matilda's mother, when he decided to immigrate to America he did not consider a source of money for it, nor did he tire himself with work, he had the trip financed by Matilda and all he did was riding the ship from shore A to shore B, from Russia to America, he was clearly depicted as a dependent character and he frequently took advantage of other people's help, as he arrived he benefited the help of Mr. Even who secured him a host family and his primer job as peddler, he then adopted this parasitic ideology for a life style, first changed the way he looked, his religion, his entire mind set, although changing the way he looked might be linked to the powerful social effect, conformity, and the paradox of fitting in but since “the ability to change” is of Jewish virtue, we are ought to say: he did not do it just for the sake of matching the group and melting to his social context, he did so with a parasitic motive, he shaved his side locks and got some neckties much like a parasite would do to cope with the new context despite the fact that Abraham Cahan made it look as though David or himself was under the effect of cognitive dissonance, there were just so many other behaviors with-decried that confirmed the parasitic attitude of David in Cahan's novel.

Carried with his passion for secular knowledge he became a man of raw ambition he learned English following the same devilish pattern, partly becoming American:

“If I came across a street faker and he spoke with a foreign accent I would pass on; if, however, his English struck me as that of a «real American,” I would pause and listen to his “lecture”, sometimes for more than an hour People who were born to speak English were superior beings, Even among fallen women I would seek those who were real Americans” (The Rise Of David Levinsky, P136)

David lived on borrowed money saving his for college; he borrowed money from Gilson, Joe, Jake and Max, pretty much everyone he knew just to arrive to his goal, after working for the Manheimers for a while, leveinsky was abused by his employer for an unprofessional mistake he did, so he used Mr. Chaiken, the Manheimers designer and the engine of their trade, to revenge himself, end the Manheimers and start his own trade:

The idiot! I soliloquized. He ought to start on his own hook with some smart business man for a partner. Let Jeff try to do without that 'lobster' of a Russian. the idea took a peculiar hold upon my imagination. I could not look at Ansel Chaikin, or think of him, without picturing him leaving the Manheimers in a lurch and becoming a fatal competitor of theirs. I beheld their downfall. I gloated over it. (The Rise of David Levinsky, P: 144)

In order to do so, David had to get some money, once again he did not think of work or of giving his project some time, instead, he thought of marrying Gussie, a woman who was collecting money for marriage,

The image of her washed-out face would not leave my mind. Her hoarding might amount to over one thousand, and in my despair the sum was tempting. "She is a good girl, the best of all I know," I defended myself before the Good Spirit in me. (the rise of David levinsky P: 150)

After she refused he runs back to Mr. Even asking for money then to Mayer Nodelman and Maximum Max: “After I paid the debt I owed Meyer Nodelman I obtained other favors from him. He took a sponsorial interest in my business and often offered me the benefit of his commercial experience in the form of maxims” (the rise of David Levinsky, page: 185), he actually started his own trade based on other people’s help, instead of buying his own house, he lived with max and Dora, then stepped between the two causing their relationship to

collapse, he did not stop himself from stealing samples and then went on justifying it all with the survival of the fittest and the social Darwinism.

The inadequacy of my working capital often forced me to have recourse to subterfuges that could not exactly be called honorable, One day, when we had some bills to meet two days before I could expect to obtain the cash, I made out and signed checks, but inclosed each of them in the wrong envelope—this supposed act of inadvertence gaining me the needed two days of grace. On another occasion I sent out a number of checks without my signature, which presumably I had forgotten to affix. (The rise of David Levinsky, page: 185)

Apparently, David's relationships with others were of symbiotic kind, he did everything he could to become American on physical terms, then he built his entire success upon parasitism, profitage and devilish tricks, holistically, David was a parasite on all levels and terms, he would always associate himself with people who would benefit him and he wouldn't do it otherwise, people who would land him money, pay for him or teach him things he ignored. his intentions were to get conformity and social acceptance so that he succeeds putting himself in a position of control, since he realized that, in a capital country where money meant power, so he deprived himself of his dream (being intellectual) and went on making his own trade, after he succeeds getting a good position, he goes back to the familiar Talmud cognition he once had, he only got there to fulfill his role as a diaspora Jew, his Americanized self was not so different then his old one to which he confirmed in a quote aforementioned.

David's life was a net of symbiotic-parasitic attitudes and behaviors; he always benefited other's help offering nothing in return. The rise of David Levinsky is actually the success of a Jewish-parasite.

General conclusion

“Anybody can make history, but only a great man can write it” Oscar Wilde. It is said that through past and history, several facts and events are revealed and great works are produced especially of those great people whose names are still uttered whenever a great work is present. The Jews have always took a massive part in history traces, they were marginalized and alienated which led to psychological conflicts to form an ambivalent psyche and character along with the suitable environment and surroundings they lived in. 1820-1924 was the period where the Jewish Diaspora set foot on America, The late nineteenth and beginning of twentieth century was a remarkable period of this massive movement where the Jews started the historical journey to “the land of opportunities, America.” The Jewish fiction flourished in this land by European Jews, among them the father of the American- Jewish fiction, Abraham Cahan, his short stories and autobiographical novels were admired by every reader who is fond of Jewish culture and literature.

Most of his works were tackling the paradox and experience his characters narrated through the stream of consciousness that is what the Lithuanian writer was famous of. He shared the perspective of the minority and how they received social and ethnical prejudice which becomes a sort of manipulation. The thing that characterized Abraham Cahan was his ambivalent attitude, he escaped his homeland seeking prosperity in the land of others, however, after he accomplished and reached the impossible by becoming a well-known writer in history. His name was stated in every literary Jewish discussion of great works. What inspires readers was his misfortune and rough past he had, he was a living in ghettos as his own race in Eastern Europe.

Cahan’s relationship with his writings was unique, he was a realist that depicted what reality is. In addition to his strong bond with his race, he always was spreading his virtue and wisdom in his novels, after his arrival to the America he tried to set a good and suitable life

for his people and inform the Jewish diaspora who came afterwards of the surrounding of the city. Thus, our aim behind this study was to examine the process of acculturation of the Jewish diaspora in the American society revealing some ambivalent ideas and paradoxes and how they were an obstacle to Cahan in seeking prosperity. In addition to conflicts of the self and question of identity before and after; that is torn between the old and the new, how the self is built by abandoning some strict conventions such as traditions and strict values, as well as creating a new self that can fit in. We also shall reveal some facts of how the American society saw the new diaspora in its lands. Plenty of literary works tackled same issues Cahan did, . in the light of immigrants themes in American literature, many works have tackled the issue of individuals struggle and the American character as well as representation of ethnic life, among the great works are: Henry James the great voice in America, and William. S. Bernard1971” who is one of the significant writers dealt with minority’s transformation. Moreover, Moses Rischin, who produced “*The promised city*” which was a remarkable book as well in tackling the transformation of the minority and its interaction in new lands atmosphere.

Along the first chapter, a brief historical overview was stated and exploration of Jewish culture and literature was mentioned, started with the great step the Jewish movement from eastern Europe to AMERICA. In addition to the memorial event that was a part of the Jewish identity; “the holocaust” or the execution of millions of European Jews under the belief of inferiority and superiority. Moreover, the Jewish literature and how it was produced in several languages which among the Yiddish language with representation of influential Jewish writers. The traces of the beginning of the Jewish writing in America including sermons, drama, philosophy, poetry, poems, fictional novels and art performed in Yiddish theatre that the Germans wrote. Those who emigrate are no different from those who experience colonization in which their literature contained ambivalent and contradictory

attitudes resulted from acculturation notions experienced with the outsider like those of culture shock and resistance as a start, ending with acceptance of manipulation “hegemony” when they accept the fact of the cultural influence of the other, racially and religiously.

The second chapter was a practical analysis of the study that tracks the most important concepts the two novels dealt with Through concepts that Cahan inserted in his novels such as Jewishness, secularism, Judaism, secular Jew...and how the terms differ. contexts. Abraham Cahan talked of how the Jewish identity shaped. And how the Jews were discriminated and their existence was not accepted in America and how they had a hostile view of them. The antisemitism was a movement held against the Jews in America and elsewhere. Segregation was a must to every new arrival to foreign land, either socially or economically. Abraham Cahan seemed to interpret history through his characters and their psychological struggle, how they were acculturated and tried to have a decent life in the home of others. He tried to revive and refresh the memories of the protagonist to make sense of the relation of the past and the present and as well as the future as a mysterious gift to the Jews.

Abraham Cahan who encountered the twentieth century as a realist and a modernist has added and changed aspects in the field of literature, as all modernist writers such as James Joyce who coined the literary device stream of consciousness, Abraham Cahan's characters were presented as his inner self, portraying the image of his journey as a young lad in Russia till his arrival to America. Illusion and problematic heroism helped in forming and giving sense to acculturation process and the paradox experienced in his writings where he manipulated history and serious happenings to shed lights on most important points that Jewish Diaspora encountered afterwards. Reaching the point where the use of psychoanalysis and autobiographical approach is met through this chapter in portraying what has been stated earlier. In addition to new historicism approach that was opted to search the relation between

the novel and its historical context, and as well the relation between past events and the construction of the presence. It aims at digging into history through literature.

The final chapter of the research focused on the well-known concept perceived by people, especially immigrants and foreigner “the American dream” in relation to the Jewish Diaspora perception of it and worldwide interpretation. In which they differ in defining it. This chapter revealed characteristics of the dream and how is being achieved by those who believe is attainable, and by those who think otherwise and present it as a “cliché and a myth”. How Abraham Cahan talked of this matter in his novels since a massive part of identity crises and acculturation is shown through the novels. This third chapter as well have tackled the concept of the parasite and how related to the Jews, how the Jews depend on others to exist and co-exist. It describes Jews as a race that depends on other races. The Jewish-Semitic race is shown as a parasitic race; its members are parasites who can only continue to live at the expense of their hosts. Moreover, this chapter included how the protagonist David was depending on others to live, first depending on people’s charity and donations after his mother’s death and then on Matilda after his decision to live in his homeland.

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الملخص

تدرس هذه الأطروحة و هذا البحث العلمي مفهوم المثاقفة والأزمات النفسية من حيث تكوين الهوية والذاتية. ساهمت هذه المفاهيم في التأثير على الأدب اليهودي وتشكيله خلال أواخر القرن التاسع عشر والثاني عشر وكيف شهد الأدب الأمريكي اليهودي تغيرات في الأسلوب والكتابات خلال هذه الفترة حيث ساهمت هذه المفاهيم في التأثير و تكوين الأدب اليهودي في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر و بداية القرن العشرين وكيف شهد الأدب الأمريكي اليهودي تغيرات في الأسلوب والكتابات خلال هذه الفترة. ركزت هذه الأطروحة على الشتات اليهودي كمجموعة عرقية مختارة لتسليط الضوء عليها في تحليل الروايات المختارة للكاتب اليهودي أدى إلى صراعات نفسية لتكوين نفسية وشخصية متناقضة جذبًا إلى جنب مع البيئة المناسبة ومحيطهم. وبالتالي ، تقدم هذه الأطروحة فهماً واسعاً لتعريف إبراهيم كاهان للعمليات التي أثرت على الهوية في تكوين الذات الجديدة في بيئة جديدة. كما قدمت الأحداث التاريخية للتاريخ اليهودي في أوروبا وكذلك الحركة اليهودية الضخمة إلى أمريكا. النفسية والاجتماعية. وساعدت السمات التاريخية في إلقاء نظرة واضحة على كيفية تأطير الأيديولوجيا وتأثرها بعدة عوامل في روايات أبراهام كاهان. وهكذا ، تساهم دراستنا في تصوير نضال الأقليات في سعيها للحصول على الاعتراف والتخلص من الاغتراب والدونية. بناء الهوية هو المحور والموضوع الرئيسي في أي كتابات المهاجرين وفي الأدب العرقي وكذلك في الثقافة. الشكل المؤثر ومركز هذه الأطروحة عالج أبراهام كاهان قضايا الأقليات في تكوين شخصية مستقرة. قمنا بتنشيط حياته بين "الآن" و "ذلك الحين" ووضحنا أيضًا كيف قاده كفاح الاعتراف ليكون شخصية عظيمة للأجيال القادمة.

كلمات مفتاحية : ابراهام كاهان، الهوية، التاريخ، الثقافة، الدين ، العلمانية ،السياسة موقف يهودي ، يهودي ، علماني