



# **The stories of David Freshman**

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Introduction

## **David freshman his life and literary growth:**

David freshman was born in 1860 on the fifth day of the Hebrew month Tisri in Zegreg close to Loods .he was brought up in a distinguished family whose members worked as merchants.

His father was an educated enlightened man, fond of literature. David considered his father as a man of wisdom and insight .his mother was rather educated who read



hymns a great deal. also there were well known artists among his relation .when David freshman was two years old his family moved from the small town of Zegreg to live in the big town of Loods which had at that time a very active commercial movement this town was also marked by the absence of Jewish ghettos that were known of loitering and unemployment .it was in fact fertile round for romantic culture from which the Ashkinaz culture which it little further and more closer to the heart of the city people with their Ashkinaz language (1). The city Loods was also a city of science and literature up to late dates .the arrival of the freshman to this city coincided with the stream of modernism that look the place .but the family like other Jewish families kept faithful to its customs and rituals .to say the truth the family was never extremist or biased and did not burden the child with its rules, on the contrary he was happy to perform, these rites and to know every thing about them .the children of the family were raised by a nanny who taught them many languages .freshman was raised by this nanny, he also took from here and there .from his religious school to the Jewish school and its principle .David freshman was a dedicated student and he started to read books .his memory was a very sharp and his conception was good but what distinguished him was his quietness and silence. He was an introvert but in spite of that he had sharp dreamer .he worked hard in his early youth aiming at putting an end to this Jewish disintegration represented by the ghettos(2).



## The beginning his literary work:

The publication of David freshman's story **In the feast forgiveness**, is considered the first stage in his basic literary career .the book was published by 'Havker Ur' in the year 1881 .in this book there is a sarcastic short story entitled "Atringona and Tringolta" this story is considered the best of what freshman had written and in his critical pamphlet "Chaos" which was published in 1883 freshman continued in his way in "the mystery of our literature" his attack against the retarded ness of literature and the methods of teaching in religious school .this pamphlet was a source of interest for many pioneer of literature then he turned towards writing the lyrical story and there was "**The Feast of Forgiveness**"

In the year 1887 he accepted the offer of the writer E.L. cantor to participate in editing the daily journal "**today**".from the time he was appointed vice –editor he started his column "**blooming letters**" which was dedicated to discuss contemporary and literary issues what distinguished these "**blooming letters**" was this Jewish sense of humour that was very entertaining, that this literary form which was new for Hebrew literature become a highly artistic form .Freshman was not satisfied by writing "**the blooming letter**" but the started writing "**letter concerning literature**" that were published in "**the day**" journal. This journal did not continue for long and it was closed in the year 1888.which its closing the



lessons of Hebrew literature were closed in freshman's face for a while and he was considered a stubborn opponent according to many writers and authors (3).

Freshman started yet, after another period in which he accompanied the man of letters Shalom Alekhum which led to freshman's writing books about the colloquial Hebrew languages .in 1900 he headed to Asking, a city in which he had lived and was connected to its culture because he had stayed there for five years and studies at the University of Brussels lesson in linguistics, philosophy, contemporary, history and arts. When the company of "**Ahi Asif**" for publishing books was founded in Warsaw, freshman was one of its main members. The main work of "**AhiAsif**" was translation and he had practiced this profession before. Among the books that he translated was **Natural science** by Ahron Brnstien Warsaw 1882 -1885 and the novel **Daniel deronda** by George Eliot and **The spear** by Byron. He then moved to "The generation " journal and worked as chief editor for "time" magazine which was published weekly then the periodical "**Time**". David freshman dedicated most of his time to write literary works from novel to story, poetry and translation. In the year 1913 the Hebrew writers celebrated freshman on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of his book '**Chaos**' they published his entire works in sixteen volumes then they published "Selected works" in four volumes



## The content of freshman's stories:

David freshman was captivated by stories of mericals and legend also stories a bout manners and Sufism .After this period he turned to enlightenment stories and when he did not find any difficulty in adaptation because he found no contrast in his upbringing between religion and enlightenment on the contrary he read foreign books along with the Ashkinaz. He read Hebrew grammar and ytanslated the bible and the prophets to the Ashkinazi according to the translation of Mendelson and his followers. He also read for classical Ashkinaz and to Hena and composed poetry. He was also influenced by contemporary Hebrew literature among them were poets and men of letters like Michael and Yeligh. The period that freshman passed through between reading and writing was not long. he tried his hands in his early years at writing poetry, stories and essays together with writing in Hebrew .he started his new method by writing in Ashkinaz because he was translating from one language to another .he translated Iet Yasfou the hypocrite by mayo to the Ashkinazi languages in this early youth he also translated (**Hegraf Mont – Cristo**) by Dumas to Hebrew. We can state here that the literary expression of freshman was smooth, simple and natural that it was not possible to know when he started it .in the year 1878 freshman's first book which was entitled "**The Hakham**" that was published by Hash her press .on this occasion he declared that he had written this book when he was thirteen (**Bar –Matisfa**). In this book we find the influence of writers who stood against the **Hakham** among them is **Yelgh**



Freshman also hinted at names of many cities in an abstract way like (**Hamaqa**) (**Sakhla**) as an indication of the small town that is full of religious people (**Heredem**) and the arrogance of the big city that is full of evil and criminals and this was a known style at that time in Hebrew literature(4). in the year 1879 he published a long poem and it was called "**for the welfare of the common people**" in this poem we find the influenced of Yalgh with the sense of humour of Hina .in the year 1879 he published in "Havkir Ur" a translation of the poem "Don Ramero" for

Hina as well .he also translated a sonnet (**A Poem of Furteen lines**) .The first line is "**Here I am a boy of fifteen**" he also published many poems Al Hakim Ur press and in the year 1880 – 1881 he wrote a lashing essay against Bert Smolensken which was entitled "from the Hidden secrets of our literature" but this critical essay was not printed.

### **Style and artistic analysis:**

"The Feast of Forgiveness" is considered the real beginning of literature production for David freshman .In this story he portrays the nostalgia for beauty and love .when they woke up, one heart those who live in the Jewish Ghetto .the flint of love and the nostalgia for beauty lightened the heart of Ester. Daughter of Sara, the latter is the wife of Josepha the musician of the villages who was killed by his patron. Love has captivated the



heart of ester as it had captivated the heart of her mother. There, on the bridge of Gredof that divided the city into two halves the first is the old quarter inhabited by the Jews and the new quarter inhabited by Alagbar. The young girl crossed the bridge and she headed singing voices the voice of the player or the singer, she fell down and her arms and legs become weak and motionless. She continued walking and the voice entered her ears because the singing was magnificent also the life that she had seen there .A life that is full of noises and activity .she was charmed by this life and charmed more by this singing and passion. the girl was attracted to this life leaving that street to become a singer on the stage .that walk from the street of the Jews in Gredof the city of the grand theatre on whose stage Ester stood ,caused her disappearance because that road led to the Agiar Synagog. The girl was a victim of the whim of one of the polish noblemen who was the killer of her father. Ester followed the manners of those noble people a long with their habits and religion and became one of them. As the first lit the heart of Ester's mother it also captured the heart of her daughter and the conflict was very strong with her. this conflict destroyed the girl. Her arrival to Gredof and her hearing of the song on the day of feast of forgiveness. The day was that of her destruction as it had been the day of her mother's madness. Freshman had used a new tune in this story which was new to the art of Hebrew stories because the battle of the parents and children is like enlightenment and wisdom .this battle now is for beauty and life .the nostalgia for beauty and life



freshman's stories .this is why the girl and not the boy is imprisoned in this battle. The main subject of his stories was the woman as the longing and yearning were the basis to his stories .freshman was lyrical in his stories this is why we see him summarizing sometimes and mixing the great admiration and concentrating on the whole. What distinguished freshman's stories is that their content mixed the Hebrew story with the life of the soul and transformed it into reality and here stood the psychological truth at the centre of the events. David freshman struggled hard to free the Hebrew story from the far fetched plot that was basic in the Hescala literature(5).

### **The complete artistic picture in David freshman's stories:**

In the year 1920 which is the same year of the war between Polan and Soviet Union, freshman left Warsaw to live in Berlin .in the middle of the year 1922 his sickness became worse and in August he gad undergone a surgery that proved that he gad lives cancer and he died in Berlin the same year on the tenth of August according to the Hebrew calendar .After his death his books, stories and translations were published in an anthology entitled "**New writings Concerning Literature**" in Berlin in the year 1923, later on his widow published his work under the title "**The writing of David freshman**"(6).





What distinguished the literary work of David freshman was the artistic versatility, some times we find him a distinguished artist at other times, the man of the complete picture and highly artistic taste clear expression as it revealed his insight together with a hidden lyricism like spiritual music that come through his speeches and essays that pours wine like magic. Thus freshman was a poet according to his real being .but his poems were hidden, recited in rooms within rooms. He also appeared as a critic and a conscious sharp and clear writer as well as being sarcastic serious and witty.

He attracts the hearts with the magic of light and shade. In fact freshman added to Hebrew literature a lot of literary picture and European style. Freshman fought in every way the indifference that existed in old Hebrew literature with theological tendency, He says "I am a live because I have a strong hand and an extended arm .this is why I ask you to keep a way these saying and that logic and choose a more beautiful taste and a better one .this taste that is shared by all western countries"(7)

It is the language that added an impression to the soul because of the tender words and also released that sound that heightened once and exploded another time .we do not also find many foreign words in his stories .As to his descriptive foundation, his writing, stories and poems had quality of less metaphors as well as the style of digging deeply in the beauty and ornamented language .we can say that freshman's love to beauty comes from this love which miraculous strange and legendary



## **Freshman's work between being influenced and influencing.**

David freshman describe in almost all his stories the distinguished moment in the life of the soul which including yearning, love and fate as well as presenting humanistic samples. Through his stories we realize the influence of the ghetto writer when they show a strange attitude and they were connected with the miracles to change the reality of the Jewish life through special moments and samples. We must know specially freshman's early stories after being influenced by Karl Emil Brintos (1848 -1905)and the picture she had drawn about the life in the ghetto ,the picture of "Shlelock Mbnov" in which he remembers the story of Yazkour "Aprayer for the soul of the dead " by freshman which being with a girl whose name is Hanna whose father works as a salesman and who had married a gentile and here we remember that this story is the seed that led to freshman's " the feast of forgiveness" thus the man who lit the match on the Sabbath and gone up gradually the ladder of high culture ,reminds us somehow with the story of "The two Gates" by freshman and perhaps as some say that it is the seed of one of freshman's stories .And here this style show an important side of freshman's early stories where we find the prejudice and religious bias shaping its chapters as well as the extremist religious clash between the conservations from all sides and those who keep the Jewish religious laws and these who acquired foreign



education, those who tell the stories of the ghetto in the language of the west who stand between the Jewish and the foreign world, or those who were accustomed to describe that clash between these two worlds. Among those writers stands Brintoz in his stories (8). because he saw that tin the war between parents and children who neglected the customs of their people a sign of religious bias but freshman has another point of view in this respect because he dug deep in to the psychology of his heroes whether they were biased or liberated and he shaped that through the spiritual necessity through the heroism of the soul. He saw from both sides i.e between parents and children there was a tragic war because the side of the fathers and mothers was not qualified to comprehended the spiritual reality between them and their sons and daughters, thus their sadness was greater than that which children had (9). And here we find the absence of the roots and target and consequently endless.



## Summary

David Freshman, the man of the letter, poet, critic and story writer had a multiple side's life concerning light and color and quiet and clear concerning the place and time dimensions.

The man of letter who describe by all the sources and talented whether literary or artistically, we can say that he had also given new life in Hebrew literature. Some critics of Modern Hebrew literature believe that this magnificent step in the novel and the story and what accompanied them such as the multiple sided artistic plot to David Freshman.

Here we come into a very important turning point in Freshman's literature of story telling that is the beginning in changing the literary stream and what accompanied it of artistic methods in Hebrew literature when he addressed the Jewish spirit, that spirit that remained a long time drenched in darkness and legends. He began to address it tenderly sometimes and sharply at others to take off the old rage and be dressed in a fine colorful cloth, new with the new principles but this does not prevent freshman from asking the male and specially the female Jew to stick to the Jewish laws and rules without being biased or prejudiced.



In his story “the Feast of Forgiveness” he addresses the family: the mother and daughter in a humanistic way once and emphasizing the importance of manners another time. Freshman had also shown the critics in the path which he had drawn to himself in his literary and critical life, this life that is mixed with the western ideas and principles, he read to Ramero and took from Hena and criticized berts Smalinsk in and this is what he called in his critical book “the mysteries of our literature” we share Freshman’s opinion that the man of letters is a world on his own because he is a story writer, a novelist, a poet and a critic.

These literary and artistic qualities that I have traced through the plan of my research enables us to say that Freshman is an artist, man of letters and story teller in a new way and participated in establishing a new foundation in Hebrew literature and that modern Hebrew literature will always owe a great deal to this great writer: David Freshman.



## Notes

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2. F.Lahover- The History of Modern Hebrew Literature volume III, Part one 1955, P.75-78.
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5. A, Ben-Ur, Modern Hebrew Literature History, Part two, Israel, Telaviv, 1972. PP. 83-90.
6. Dr.Kahild Ismael Ali, Modern Hebrew Texts, Baghdad, 1989, PP.51-55.
7. J.Klausner, a History of Modern Hebrew Literature, U.S.A, 1974, P.95.
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