

**Racial Prejudice in Will Eisner's *Fagin The Jew* Graphic Novel**Asyipa N¹, Laksmi Ady Kusumoriny²^{1,2}, Sastra Inggris, Universitas Pamulangdosen00772@unpam.ac.id**Article Info***Article History:*

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This study discusses racial prejudice issue experienced by main character in a graphic novel entitled *Fagin The Jew* by Will Eisner (2003). This study aims to explore the racial prejudice through the prejudice scale as the manifestation of prejudice action and also reveal the ego defense as the response to prejudice. The method used in conducting this study is qualitative approach and the theory of prejudice by Allport (1954) is used to analyze the data. The results show that there are four scales of prejudice act occur within the story. These scales are verbal rejection (antilocution), avoidance, discrimination, and physical attack. Moreover, the study exposes that the victims did some ego defenses mechanism, namely denial of membership, slyness and cunning and enhanced striving.

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One of the problems often occurs in society is the problem of race. In an area inhabited by various races, it is very possible to trigger prejudice of one group against another. This happens because of the belief in a superior race and inferior race. Those who are constructed as superior race often commit unpleasant acts against the lower class. The assumption of superiority based on race came to be known as racial prejudice. Racial perspective in society begins on how people differentiate human in physical characteristics. Forms of raciality can be associated with factors such as religion, alienation, clothing, culture, citizenship, gender, and language. All of these prejudices can emphasize a race as a standard interaction between individuals or groups in society.

Prejudiced people usually have certain expectations of other individuals or groups based on subjective factors. One of these subjective factors comes from the mindset about minority group and if it is demonstrated in an action, it will usually increase from one action to another. This level of prejudice is known as the prejudice scale. The scale of prejudice starts with verbal rejection, avoidance, discrimination, physical attacks and finally extermination (Allport, 1954). This real action of prejudice will certainly affect the victims of prejudice.

Everyone will definitely react to the bad treatment they get, as well as victims of prejudice. The victim of prejudice will try to defend his ego. This ego defense is the way the victim responds to prejudice and the strategies employed to defend himself against the threat posed. The way victims of prejudice maintain their egos depends on their own-life circumstance. Some of the ego defenses include obsessive concern, denial of membership, clowning, self-hate, slyness and cunning and can even lead to prejudice against other groups.

The reality of the above statement can be seen from the situation in the United States of America where there are various kinds of racial groups. Life in America is dominated by white citizens who consider their people superior to others, also placed the black as the lowest race and were treated as slaves. There have been many cases that happened to the black in America related to prejudice issues. For example, as reported by the BBC (2020), George Floyd was died from being held by the police with his knee on the asphalt. The incident began with a cashier reporting to the police because Floyd was suspected of using counterfeit money. Here Floyd got discrimination because of the way his was arrested was not according to the standard procedure, after which he got physical assault that caused him to death.

Furthermore, the famous racial prejudice case is the prejudice initiated by Adolf Hitler who considers that the German Aryan race is the most superior race compared to other races. Hitler also assumed that the Jews were the people who caused Germany lose in World War I. Based on these assumptions, hatred toward Jews and favor of the German Race was then spread. It was Hitler's antilocution that led Germans to avoid their Jewish neighbors and erstwhile friends. This incident turned out to have an impact on a Hollywood actress, Audrey Hepburn. She has an obsessive concern, where she feels anxiety and threatened by Nazi-themed films. She even refused to play the character Kate in the film *A Bridge too Far* (Idntimes, 2020).

On the other hand, cases of racial prejudice is not only found in everyday life, but also in a literary work. One of literary works that often reflect racial issue in society is graphic novel. Graphic novel can be defined as a long form of comic book. In a graphic novel, there are two important components, namely verbal language and illustration. Apart from verbal language, illustration in graphic novel also play an important role in building stories. It represents things that are not expressed in words. Graphic novel usually require a much more structured and complex storyline using heavier themes compared to comics such as realistic fiction, historical fiction and racism. The racism theme can be found in the graphic novel titled *Fagin The Jew*.

Fagin the Jew was written by Will Eisner, an American cartoonist and writer, he is known as the pioneer of graphic novel. In this graphic novel Eisner tries to relate the problems experienced by Fagin - a Jewish villain who lived in the Ashkenazim community of London in the 19th century. This story is a literary criticism of Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. In *Oliver Twist*, Dickens tells the story of Fagin in a strong antisemitic tone. Eisner tried to relate it in Fagin's perspective as a first-person perspective. The novel told that Fagin's fate as a great villain he did not get of his own will. All that he got because of the prejudice against him who is a Jew. This novel portrayed the prejudice scale experienced by Fagin and other Jewish characters, it also depicted the ego defense as a respond to prejudice. How racial prejudice and ego defenses occur in the graphic novel *Fagin The Jew* is a question that this study intends to address.

Prejudice is judgment and negative opinion toward an inferior group. This prejudice is usually not accompanied by concrete evidence, based only on the assumptions of most

people. Allport (1954) argues that people emotionally resist evidence that contradicts our prejudices unlike that which occurs with ordinary prejudgments.

Allport (1954) summarizes his discussion about the characteristics of prejudice with the following definition: ". . . prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group". Allport (1954) argues that prejudice is often based on hearsay rather than on direct evidence, and are resistant to change even in the face of new information. In sum, prejudice is unfair judgment toward minority which is given by majority group without any clarification, it mostly done as the reason of a cultural difference.

For measuring the manifestation of prejudice in a society, Allport created prejudice scale. The scale contains five stages of prejudice, ranked by increasing harm they produce, the scale are verbal rejection (antilocution), avoidance, discrimination, physical attack, and extermination.

Verbal rejection is an act of making jokes about another group that contains an expression of hateful opinions. Based on Allport scale, verbal rejection also called antilocution (speaking against), and nowadays it is called hate speech. According to Allport (1954), words betraying antagonism come easily. Antilocution is often believed to be harmless, but it can harm the self-esteem of the people of the targeted group. Verbal rejection is the lowest degree of prejudice. On the other hand, even the lowest degree betrays some of the complexities of the problem.

Allport (1954:50) states that mild animosity often underlies antilocution of the joking or derisive kind. Some of it is depicted into friendly humor. But even when jokes seems friendly, sometimes they can mask genuine hostility, by providing a disarming method of telling off the out-group and exalting the ingroup.

More intense hostility is reflected in the antilocution of name-calling ("kike", "nigger", "wop", etc.). As noted previously, the more spontaneous and irrelevant the antilocution, the stronger the hostility that lies behind it. When antilocution reaches a high degree of intensity, the chances are considerable that it will be positively related to open and active discrimination, possibly to violence. Strong antilocution is almost certain to be backed up by discriminatory action.

The next level of prejudice is avoidance. Allport (1954) explains that avoidance occurs if the prejudice is more intense, it leads the individual to avoid members of the disliked group, even perhaps at the cost of considerable inconvenience. In this case, there is only a small chance of inflict harm toward the group they dislike. It is an indirect attitude of dislike that people mate with their own kind. They eat, play, reside in homogeneous clusters. They visit with their own kind, and prefer to worship together (Allport, 1954). It is common since it requires less effort to communicate with people with similar presuppositions.

Differential treatment based on individual qualities probably should not be classed as discrimination. Discrimination occurs when an individual is subjected to unequal treatment because of their actual or perceived race. According to Allport (1954) discrimination includes any conduct based on distinction made on grounds of natural or social categories, which have no relation either to individual capacities or merits, or to the concrete behavior of the individual person. It is a detrimental distinction which does not take account of the particular characteristics of the individual person.

Physical violence occurs when people use a part of their body or an object to control a person's action. Physical violence includes using physical force which results pain,

discomfort and injury, hitting, pinching, burning, stabbing, pushing, slapping, beating, threatening with a weapon or other objects and others. Violence is a negative treatment which causes an affliction to its victim. According to Allport (1954:57), violence is always an outgrowth of milder states of mind. Although most barking (antilocution) does not lead to biting, yet there is never a bite without previous barking. In short, violence is a form of crime which oppresses person or groups to be inferior and powerless.

The last level of prejudice is extermination. This refers to a massive physical attack. Allport (1954) further gives an example of extermination, they are lynchings, pogroms, massacres, and the Hitlerian program of genocide mark the ultimate degree of violent expression of prejudice.

The way an individual reacts to his membership will depend on his own life-circumstances. How they were trained, how they suffer from persecution, how detached his own philosophy of life. Allport (1954) argued that ego defensiveness will develop among member groups that are set off for ridicule, disparagement and discriminations. It can be said that ego defense is the way how victims respond to prejudice, and on the strategies that they adopt to defend themselves from threat that it imposes. Only to a slight extent can say that certain types of ego defense will be more common in one disliked group than in another. Not all minority group members – even those of the most persecuted groups – display visible ego defenses. There are certain forms of ego defenses that frequently happened to victims who experience the prejudice including:

Perhaps the simplest response a victim can make is to deny his membership in a disparaged group. This device comes easy for those who have no distinctive color, appearance or accent and who do not in fact feel any loyalty or attachment in their group (Allport, 1954).

Slyness and cunning is a form of response by victims of prejudice as a means of gaining petty revenge. Throughout history and all over the world one of the commonest accusations against out-groups is that they are dishonest, tricky, sneaky. The tendency becomes aggravated if survival depends upon cunning.

The weaker makes forays against the stronger. Cunning is not confined to forms of stealing. It entails all sorts of pretense. One ingratiates oneself, flatters, gains favors, plays the clown, and generally cheapens the ethics of human relations in the interest of both survival and revenge (Allport, 1954).

Enhanced striving is one response to the victims of prejudice where they redouble their efforts to overcome their handicap. It is because they assume that their handicap causes prejudice. So, some members of minority groups view their handicap as an obstacle to be surmounted by an extra spurt of effort (Allport, 1954).

The term graphic novel was first used by Will Eisner on his work *A Contract with God* in 1987. Eisner (1985) suggests that graphic novel is 'Sequential Art' that consists of arranged pictures and words to deliver ideas in the form of storytelling. The term graphic novel in the world of literature is still being debated. Because the format of the book is almost the same as a comic, graphic novels are sometimes regarded as comic books.

Although the basic concepts of comics and graphic novels are similar, the presentation and format of the two media are different. Comic books are presented serially, whereas graphic novels are often, but not always, contained in a single volume. Goldsmith (2005) states that graphic novels are presented in several non-serial volumes when fully published. Typically, comics are produced in series in a pamphlet or magazine format, with light and easy themes as background to the story. Graphic novels on the other hand

require a much more structured and complex storyline using heavier themes compared to comics such as racism, historical fiction or realistic fiction.

In its consumption, graphic novels are read like books. As Goldsmith (2005) says for Western publications, this means that information is presented in the same pattern as the reader's eye, from the upper left corner to the lower right corner of each page. Many think that graphic novels are superhero-themed, but graphic novels are targeted at a wider audience with the main problems faced by adolescents such as age - identity formation or identity development, friendship, and so on. Graphic novels also have many genres that appear in literary and other media formats such as historical fiction, romance, science fiction, fantasy, realistic fiction, humor, and so on. Basically, graphic novels use images and printed text to engage readers and tell a story. The reader walks with the characters and sees from their perspective. Printed text and images are equally important, both of which provide important information for the story.

As with other literary works, graphic novels also have elements. There are two types of elements in graphic novels, the technical element and the narrative element. Technical elements it consist of panel, speech balloon, bubble thought, caption box, and so on (Goldsmith, 2005). Panel in graphic novel is the bounded scene presents a moment in the narrative, while speech balloon is the speech or spoken words which typically enclosed by a rounded line. Balloon speech and bubble thought are differentiate by the shape of their enclosure and bubble thought is for the character's thoughts to describe words that does not spoken aloud. On the other hand, Goldsmith (2005) also explains that caption box is for describing the content of a photo or other image, the captions in comics supply information that cannot be communicated through image or a character's text.

While the narrative elements in graphic novel are the same as in other prose works, it is also called intrinsic elements. Wellek and Warren (1977) mention that intrinsic elements are internal elements such as setting, plot, theme, character that construct a literary work. The first narrative element is Character. Character is an imaginary picture of a person in literary works. According to Bennet and Royle (2004), character is a soul of literature created by an author based on his feelings and desires, and character is also an entity that would usually become the center of a story. Characters can be divided into several types, such as role, function, the difference of point of view and observation, yet this study prefers to simply choose the type of role, such as main character and minor character or supporting character. The main character has an important role in a story, and he or she usually dominates every part of the story and becomes the central character of the story. It also can be concluded that the supporting character is the character that merely supports the main character's story directly or indirectly, and he or she usually has no much time to show up in the main character's story.

The next element is settings. Setting is a place or where a person, an animal or a plant live in, when an event takes place and what a condition of a situation happens. As Abrams (1999) mentions that while talking about setting, it largely discusses about universal surroundings, time and social conditions in which readers could see or observe an event happening. In addition, it portrays what moods of a situation or a condition in the place are. Thus, readers could notice that setting could be described as the surroundings or the place lived by the character or the society as if it portrays the feelings or moods of the character in details of time.

Abrams (1999) states that plot is recognized as Freytag's Pyramid: Exposition is the beginning of a story which provides background information about the story, about the setting and about the major characters. A rising action (a complication) is the beginning a

conflict of characters versus other characters, and the complication turns into the action of the conflict and leads to a crisis of a tense moment called the climax of the story. A falling action is described as an outcome done to fix the conflict, and after the conflict has been sorted out and resolved. It is defined as the resolution of the story.

METHOD

This study used qualitative approach. McKinnon (2014) states that qualitative research seek to understand the communicative actions of people in particular contexts and the meanings associated with those actions. In qualitative research, data collection is carried out from the object being studied. Data collection in this study focused on quotes and pictures related to the issue of racial prejudice in Will Eisner's *Fagin The Jew* graphic novel. The collected data were then analyzed inductively so that they were able to unravel the issues reflected in the graphic novel *Fagin The Jew*. The results are then displayed in descriptive form.

FINDING AND ANALYSIS

Racial Prejudice in *Fagin The Jew* Graphic Novel

The graphic novel *Fagin The Jew* represented racial prejudice toward Jewish people. The narrative of racial prejudice is presented through the monologue of the character Fagin who tells the bitter experiences of his life as a Jew and at the same time asks Dickens to be accountable – Dickens is the writer who makes Fagin look so evil in his novel, *Oliver Twist*. Fagin experienced the prejudice because he is a Jew. Jews are stereotyped as thieves, cunning and lower class. This is then imprinted on each individual in the Jewish community so that the members therein become objects of prejudice. Without some generalized beliefs concerning a group as a whole, a hostile attitude could not be sustained (Allport, 1954). This analysis will focus on the prejudice scale as a manifestation of prejudice in society. This scale consists of verbal rejection (antilocution), avoidance, discrimination, and physical attack.

Fagin and His Father Got Verbal Rejection

As a Jew, Fagin found it difficult to live in Europe, even in London. London is known as a place that has no special rules for Jews, but for him, even London life was not simple.

But for us, even London life was not simple. These were grim times, and yet the best of times for us new comers. We were uneducated and endured a pauperdom perfumed by the promise of opportunity. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 7)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that the background of the Jews getting bad treatment from their surroundings is because they are "newcomers". Especially Ashkenazim Jews, they came later than Sephardim, therefore Sephardim's level was still higher than Ashkenazim. In addition, Ashkenazim people also come from uneducated people. So it is not surprising if they get bad treatment, it is because they are at the lowest social level in society. Fagin and her father experienced this unpleasant treatment.

Fagin and his father often get ridicule and humiliation, not only personally but also insulting their group. As he had experienced when Fagin watched a boxing fight with his father, one of the players was a Jew and the other was a gentile. Someone offered a bet for the gentile, Fagin's father made a bet for the Jewish player. Then someone with a wine bottle in his arm shouted,

“*The Jew won't win! Jews don't fight. They Steal! Ha, ha, ha!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 11).

Negative stereotypes of Jews have become a common joke. In this case, the mocker saying that sentence is depicted drunk, in a state that is not fully conscious. From this it can be seen that even in an unconscious state, gentiles can mock Jews. It simply concludes that negative stereotypes have been etched in his subconscious.

Gentiles, especially anti-Semites, harbored hatred for the Jews. In a Hungary saying as cited in Allport (1954) says that an anti-Semite is a person who hates the Jews more than is absolutely necessary. The antilocution aimed at Fagin's father was based on this hatred. Until then he became a spectacle and ridicule among other gentiles.

The panel above shows an old man standing in front of other people who were rejoicing. The old man is Fagin's father who intends to collect his winning from the gentiles. There was nothing wrong on what Fagin's father did, but the gentiles cursed him. From the picture, it can be seen the position of Fagin's father was cornered as well as his head bowed down in expectation, while the gentiles were sitting with their heads up, looking at Fagin's father angrily and making him a spectacle. Here it can be illustrated that the gentiles did not consider Fagin's father as equal to them. Coupled with the insult made



Eisner, 2003, pg. 14

by one of the gentiles:

“*All you Jews are alike money, money, money!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 14).

There was nothing wrong with the collection of bets made by Fagin's father, but because he was come from a lower class Jew he was treated unpleasantly. Here it is illustrated that these gentiles have hostility towards the Jews. As stated by Allport (1954) the more spontaneous and irrelevant the antilocution, the stronger hostility that lies behind it.

Another antilocution was later found in a complainant's case. This time experienced by Fagin who was working as a tailor with Mr. Mc Nab. Fagin was slandered for stealing by Gilley. Surely Mc Nab was angry,

“*. . y' dirty thievin Jew!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 37).

Mc Nab cursed Fagin and threw him out of his shop. He did so without clarifying beforehand. There is no desire to find out the truth, Mc Nab believes in Gilley's words and immediately blames Fagin because the stereotype of thieves has become very attached to the Jews,

"Well, you know who Jews are!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 38).

It is not uncommon for a Jew to steal. As in this case, the person who was first accused of stealing was Fagin, even though there were other people besides him in the shop. Mc Nab expelled Fagin for a mistake he never did. Of all the hateful expressions received by Fagin, making him someone to avoid. People avoid him because they cannot escape from the stereotype that says Jews are thieves. His every action was suspected, even in a helpless state. The discussion will be explained in the next subchapter.

Fagin Being Avoided

Avoidance is the second step of prejudice scale. If prejudice is more intense, it leads the individual to avoid members of the disliked group, even perhaps at the cost of considerable inconvenience (Allport, 1954). Out group will stay away from in group, or vice versa. As happened to gentiles who avoided the Jews. The stereotype of the sneaky thief has been very attached to the Jews. Gentiles believed that, and tried to avoid the Jews.

The panel below shows a little Fagin try to get some help for his father, but the couple avoiding them.

"'careful, it's a Jewish trick! Don't stop!'". (Eisner, 2003, pg. 15).



Eisner, 2003, pg. 15

Jews are known as cunning thieves, who can do various ways to get the loot. But in this case there are no lies. Fagin's father died with blood streaming down his head. But the two people passing by avoided them. It can be seen that the two people turned their backs on this scene as a sign that they really did not care and ignored the little Fagin. The more intense the avoidance occurs, the more unfair actions occur in the group being avoided. Because Jews are often avoided, they are then subject to discrimination by gentiles. Fagin and his closest Jewish people also experienced this.

Fagin Being Discriminated

Intense avoidance will lead to acts of discrimination. Discrimination comes about only when people deny to other individuals or groups equality of treatment which they may wish (Allport, 1954). Fagin experienced acts of discrimination, one of which was based on the background of the region where he lived, Europe. In much of Europe, Jews were denied citizenship and its rights, barred from holding posts in government and the military, and excluded from membership in guilds and the professions (Berenbaum, 2020). Moreover Fagin is an Ashkenazim Jew, a lower class Jew. But his group found a place that was nicer than other places, where there were no specific rules governing Jews, London.

Here they found a better community, where Jews were not subject to special laws or legal pogroms. England was a country that had long been a refuge for Spanish and Portuguese Jews known as Sephardim. They were the earliest to arrive and had become well established, whereas the newly arriving Middle European were regarded as lower class. German, Poles and the like were called Ashkenazim. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 6)

Based on the quotation above it can be seen that Jews were not treated the same as other group in Europe. But London is a better place than any other country. No special rules were made for Jews. Even London is just a better place, in fact Fagin's life is still not easy. *"But for us, even London life was not simple"* (Eisner, 2003, pg. 7). Even in a country that is considered the safest, the Jews do not feel comfortable. Fagin's life is overshadowed by the pressure of gentiles who regard him as lowly, poor, cunning and useless. Moreover he is Ashkenazim, who occupies the lowest caste of the lowest. Sephardim's life is still better.

Sephardim can attend English schools, but not Ashkenazim. The Ashkenazim children can only go to Bar Mitzvah. Fagin does not want to go there. He came under fire by his mother when he asked to go to an English school.

"a foolish dream, boy . . . That is for Sephardim. Not for us!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 9).

Even within the Jewish group itself it is still divided into two groups. The Sephardic occupied a higher position because they had migrated to England earlier. Ashkenazi the newcomer was considered a lower caste. Here there is a power relation, where the one who takes the longer to occupy a place has more power than the newcomer.

"On the other hand, for those who came later from Europe. . . A life of begging and peddling in the street is all that they have." (Eisner, 2003, pg. 10).

The Ashkenaim realized that, they are used to the unfair treatment they get. The quotation above is the words uttered by a rabbi to Fagin when Fagin insisted that he did not want to be a Jew. This indicates that even the religious leader surrendered to the fate he received. As if that injustice is a destiny that God has given.

When Fagin lived in Mr. Solomon's residence, he found a different side of Jewish life. Previously he found the Jewish life as a low class is a destiny that must be accepted. But Mr. Solomon is a person who insists on fighting for equality for his people, especially the Ashkenazim children. But it was not easy to get what Mr. Solomon expected, he realized.

"Jews have enterprise, gentiles have birthright!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 22).

In other words, Jews are born without the right to exist. Jews live by relying on enterprise. Jews who did not try hard had to taste the bitterness of being a lowly. Jews who cannot survive must be willing to be buried in misery, because they do not even have the right to life.

Fagin encountered another difficulty when he worked as a houseboy at Mr. Solomon's residence. Mr. Solomon was a man who was very determined to fight for equality for the Ashkenazi. He wants to set up a school for Ashkenazi children. But many obstacles he got in his way. Fagin is always loyal to accompany Mr. Solomon wherever

he goes. They go around to the donor's house to raise funds. But sometimes the rejection they get. The rejection was based on the unwillingness to be rejected in the community, even though the donor himself was a Jew, a Sephardic Jew.

“Oh, mother, if you keep giving to them. . . We’ll never be accepted” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 18).

In this case it can be seen that even a fellow Jew himself does not want to help one another because of social demands. As if to indicate that the Sephardim were not the same people as the Ashkenazi. Ashkenazi will have a bad influence on Sephardic's reputation in his social circles. Therefore, Ashkenazi should be avoided by not giving any more donations.

In the process of establishing a school, Mr. Solomon also experienced difficulties because of the inherent Jewish frills.

“Well . . . Now . . . Ahem . . . Your religion may be a problem there, but I believe I can exert some influence. . . ” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 20).

Mr. Solomon even had to justify any means to achieve it. One of the way is through the practice of bribery. It can be concluded that as lowly people, Jews have to pay dearly just to get equality. Discrimination is very obvious. Gentiles can easily attend school, but the school does not accept Jews especially Ashkenazi Jews. Even though education is a birthright for every child, but not for Ashkenazim child.

Fagin experienced another act of discrimination in his last moments. He was sentenced to death by a mistake he never made. Nancy was killed by Sikes, Sikes hung hanging, and there was only Fagin at the scene. Fagin was caught and received a death sentence. He was sentenced to death for a mistake he did not make. Fagin felt that what he got was unfair. While waiting for his time to be executed, Fagin is approached by Mr. Dickens, the author of the novel Oliver Twist, who makes Fagin look very cruel in his book. Fagin raved to Mr. Dickens, the writer who thought that the criminal Jew was a truth.

“Truth?? Is referring to a man only by his race is a truth? . . . Or is “Jew” as a word for criminal true?? Or is a picture of Jew that is based upon a common bias Truth? Hah!!” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 112)

Fagin felt that what he had experienced was unfair. Just because he was a Jew, he was known as a criminal. As if the terms Jews and criminals are attached, Fagin demands responsibility from Dickens who has successfully introduced him as a great villain in his book. Fagin holds Dickens accountable, not only Jews who become criminals in London.

“Are there no gentile money lenders or sly receivers of suspect goods in London?? . . . Is this truly confined to Jews alone??” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 113).

London criminals are not only Fagin who is a Jew. Sikes, his gentile friend is also a criminal. But in his book, Dickens burdens the criminal image on Fagin only, not on Sikes.

“Goodbye, old Fagin... In my later books I’ll treat your race more evenly!” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 114).

At the end of the story, Dickens realizes his mistake in portraying the Jews in his book. This novel reveals what really happened to Fagin. Here it can be concluded that the image of Fagin as a great villain was obtained due to bias.

As depicted in the screen capture above, it shows a group of people looking up at the scene above. This group of people seemed to be witnessing the life story of Fagin. Most of the people showed shocked faces, as if describing how shocked they were to find out what had actually happened.

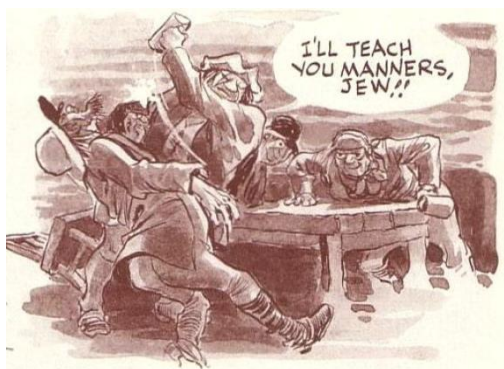


Eisner, 2003, pg. 114

Fagin Got Physical Attack

Physical attack is a negative treatment which causes an affliction to its victim. Allport (1954) states that violence is always an outgrowth of milder states of mind. Although most barking (antilocution) does not lead to biting, yet there is never a bite without previous barking.

There are some physical attack depicted in this story. The first was experienced by



Eisner, 2003, pg. 15



Eisner, 2003, pg. 35

Fagin's father, when he was about to collect the bet he should have gotten.

"I'll teach you manners, Jew!!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 15).

The panel showed Fagin's father being beaten by gentiles. It is illustrated that the position of Fagin's father and the leader of the gentiles was at the front while the other gentiles were laughing around them. This illustrates that they thought this fight was an entertainment show. The hitter starts the opening stroke saying: *"I'll teach you manners, Jew!!"*. This action was motivated by gentile hatred towards Jew. This can also be seen from the hate speech that gentile said when he hit Fagin's father. These words seem to state that what Fagin's father did was a wrong manner. After cursing, the gentile beat Fagin's father mercilessly until he died. This indicates that gentiles thought Jews do not have the right to get their money easily, Jews do not have the right to deal with gentiles, Jews do not have the right to live.

"It's off to the mines for yer now, Jews!!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 35)

Fagin himself experienced physical violence. He was caned after he was caught making love to a woman in his colony. In fact, Fagin did not intend to do it, it was the woman who teased him. As a result, he received caning from the colony guard. After that he was sent to a mining site to serve a more severe sentence. Physical violence here acts like the initial act for an offense before being subject to a heavier sentence.

Fagin got other physical abuse when he was accused of stealing by Mr. McNab. Knowing the news that his belongings were stolen, Mr. McNab immediately expelled Fagin by kicking him.

As illustrated in the picture above, Fagin is being kicked by Mr. McNab while on the outside Gilley is busy collecting the money that he stole from McNab. Here again, Fagin gets violent for an act he never did. McNab who is immersed in Gilley's talk believes that Fagin is the culprit. He made no attempt to confirm the information. Instead, he is shackled to the stereotype 'Jews are thieves and cunning'. Shortly after hearing the news, McNab kicked Fagin out of his shop.

Fagin Did Some Ego Defenses

This section reveals how the characters that being object of prejudice response to the prejudice they got. This response then called ego defense. Ego defensiveness will frequently be found among members of groups that are set off ridicule, disparagement, and discrimination (Allport, 1954). In this novel, several defenses were found through



Eisner, 2003, pg. 37

prejudice victims to respond to the prejudice they received. The defenses are in the form of denial of membership, slyness and cunning, and enhanced striving.

Fagin Denying His Membership

No one wants to be lowly. No one wants to be a victim of persecution. The simplest response a victim can make is to deny his membership in a disparaged group (Allport, 1954). It is hard to be a member of a minority group who gets unpleasant treatment. As if to be a despicable part. In this novel there are several cases show that some characters deny being Jewish. This denial is their response as prejudice victims.

Young children can easily learn something. Just like Fagin. Since childhood Fagin has seen how the Jews live in London. He saw that the Jewish life was difficult. Jews are poor and lowly. There was a desire not to become Jewish. “... *I don't want to be a Jew in this country. We are only poor beggars here.*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 10). This quote was uttered by Fagin to a rabbi who was teaching him. Fagin said it while crying. This indicates that being Jewish is a sadness.

Another denial is found in the form of a desire to convert.

“*You'll be baptized! You'll marry in the church of England. I'll see to that!!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 18).

This quote was said by a mother to her daughter. They came from Sephardim Jews, who were actually higher in rank than the Ashkenazi. Their lives are also quite well off. However, it did not make them satisfied. As Jews, even though they were sephardic, they were still looked down upon. Therefore, baptism was the way they thought it appropriate to raise one's rank.

This denial is also intended for a specific purpose. Because of existing discrimination, it was difficult for Jews to occupy certain positions in government.

“... *As a gentile, my son, Benjamin, could one day become prime minister!..*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 19).

These words were spoken by Mr. Isaac D'Israeli, a leader in the Sephardic community. Here it can be seen that, 'jews' seems to be just a burdensome appendage. Mr. Isaac, a leader who should be followed by his members, did not even consider Judaism to be a belief. He considered it as clothes that could be changed.

Another form of denial is found in the more massive ones. Mr. Joseph Frey opened a special school to Christianize Jewish children. This school aims to make them acceptable in society.

“*Jews must embrace christianity to do this!! Our school will teach your youth crafts and skills while become christians, y'see!!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 23).

The quote seems to indicate that being a Christian is a solution to the problem at hand. This was welcomed by little Fagin who had similar thoughts.

“*I would like to join your school, Mr. Frey!*” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 23).

Fagin accepted Mr. Frey's offer as if this was the attractive offer he was looking for. Here it can be seen that Fagin really wants to be gentile. According to him, the Jews were the shackles that made him miserable. By becoming a Christian, he will escape from that tribulation.

Fagin Being Slyness and Cunning

It is not unusual for a criminal to come from an oppressed people. One of the commonest accusation against outgroups is that they are dishonest, tricky and sneaky

(Allport, 1954). Just as Fagin experienced, he and his group became a people who were looked down upon and ostracized.

In fulfilling their daily needs, they are determined to do cunning. Fagin was taught this cunning from childhood.

“Pappa. . . You switched it. . . His was a good coin. . . But you gave him a bad one!?”
(Eisner, 2003, pg. 9).

This case occurred when Fagin was a child, when his father exchanged coins bought by buyers. Actually the buyer gave a good coin, but Fagin's father said that the coin was bad. Even though the ugly coin is his own. Fagin's father did this for profit, and Fagin saw it as a lesson. Afterwards Fagin's father promised to teach Fagin another trick. Fagin's father considered this a tradition that must be passed on. *“Ah, Moses my boy, these are times that ask for certain skills of survival, you see!”* (Eisner, 2003, pg. 9). At that time, cunning was recognized as an ashkenazim Jewish trade for a living.

After his father died, Fagin was forced to support himself and his dying mother. He did what his father had taught him. The panel shows Fagin when he stole for the first time. It can be seen that Fagin's face grimacing when doing the action, this indicates that Fagin actually does not want to do it. In the picture, it also can be seen that it is snowing heavily, snow falling indicates the difficulties that Fagin must face. Having nothing to sell, and no one willing to hire him, stealing is the only thing Fagin can do.



Eisner, 2003, pg. 10

When he was growing up, stealing and cunning was what he already mastered. When he is in a predicament that starves him, he is not confused.

In the penal colony I was “bought” by a plantation owner, and for a year I was a part of a gang clearing a swamp. There was little to eat and hard work from dawn to dusk. . . . But I knew how to find food. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 35)

The above quotation describes Fagin's condition who is no longer confused when he is faced with difficulties. He was hired arbitrarily and was given little food. The sentence *“But I knew how to find food”* refers to the act of theft that he committed. The quote above also describes Fagin's condition, who thinks that stealing and cunning are part of him.

He also took cunning actions to get a lighter job. The panel above shows Fagin bribing his boss with the stolen goods he got. This indicates that Fagin can get what he wants by being cunning.

Another cunning act he took for revenge. As illustrated in the quote below:



Eisner, 2003, pg. 36

Mr. Dawson was a good man, fair and kind, and he provided me with a safe haven. Meanwhile, my anger over the betrayal at McNab kept boiling inside me, and before long I devised a plan to avenge myself. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 39)

The quotation describes Fagin, who is still heartbroken at being accused of stealing by Mr. McNab. McNab abused Fagin and kicked him out. After Fagin got a better job, he still held a grudge against McNab. He took revenge by accusing McNab of stealing Dawson's tan clothes. McNab was finally caught. This act is quite heinous deed. Take revenge with the punishment obtained by McNab is heavier.

After Mr. Dawson died, Fagin was given the opportunity to return to his hometown, London. There he continues to carry out the same tradition. As illustrated in the picture below.

The picture shows what Fagin did for the first time after arriving in London. He walked with the Clock in his hand, smiling. In the picture it can be seen that the watch is not his, but it is in his hands. Fagin's expression looks happy, as if proud of what he has got. He walked with confidence as if he would not face any difficulties.



Eisner, 2003, Pg. 43

At the end of the story, Fagin admits that the crimes he had committed were not on his will. This is illustrated in the quote below:

"I am Fagin, a member of a dispersed but noble breed! Jews who are often forced by circumstance to survive in the foul, frowsy dens and squal misery of midnight London, are not Thieves by choice!" (Eisner, 2003, pg. 112)

Fagin said that sentences to Mr. Dickens. He was disgusted by the accusations he had been getting. He argued that the crime he had committed was due to his surroundings which forced him to act like that. He did not steal by choice. He had difficulty finding a decent job because he was a Jew. One of the ways to survive the harshness of the environment around him is by cunning.

Fagin and Mr. Solomon Enhancing Their Striving

Enhanced striving is one response to the victims of prejudice where they redouble their efforts to overcome their handicap. In this case, being Jewish is their handicap that causes prejudice. The double effort was done by Mr. Solomon who tried to establish a school for young Ashkenazim. He had difficulties that prevented him from fulfilling his wish. As illustrated in the quotation below.

The reputation of the Jews in the London Slums continued to soil the status of their betters. This only prodded Mr. Solomon and his colleagues into stronger efforts to build a fund for the school. Mr. Solomon, at least undeterred by Jewish class prejudices, called on Mr. Isaac D'Israeli, a leader in the Sephardic community. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 19)

Mr. Solomon wished to improve the reputation of the Jews in London. But he had to exert a lot of energy to make it happen. The quote above shows that to get funds from donors, he must exert *stronger effort*. Although in fact the donors are also Jews. Donors doubt that the plan will materialize. Given that building a school is not easy, especially this is a school specifically for lowly Jews. There will be resistance from some parties. But Mr Solomon did not give up. He is even willing to do anything to make his wish come true.

"Well your lordship. . . Ahh. . . There may be another way to meet the note that I might find acceptable." (Eisner, 2003, pg. 20)

The quotation above shows that Mr. Solomon is willing to do anything to get *acceptance*. He asked for *another way* so that his wish could come true. This shows that he, who is actually a Jew, is not '*accepted*' in society. He found that being Jewish was a handicap to overcome. For that, he needed an "*unusual way*" to build a school. The way offered is by bribing.

Mr. Solomon's fundraising does not stop with one or two donors. He is still in search of funds for the establishing school.

Mr. Solomon still pursued his search for funds to uplift the lower class Jews of London by establishing a school to educate young Ashkenazi and help them in advance by ways other than crime. (Eisner, 2003, pg. 21)

The quotation above shows that the desire to establish a school was based on the habits of askenazi who liked to commit criminals. He thought that Askenazi needed

education to make them make a better living than committing criminals. He thought that, “it is wealthy Jews who seek acceptance in this society by uplifting the reputation of their poor.” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 21). From this it can be seen that for him being a Jew is an obstacle to gaining acceptance, and one way to gain acceptance is by increasing the reputation of Jews in the eyes of society. Here Mr. Solomon realized that, “Jews have enterprise, gentiles have birthright!” (Eisner, 2003, pg. 22). For this reason, Jews need to work hard to fulfill their dreams because they do not have a birthright.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the depiction of racial prejudice toward Jewish characters in *Fagin the Jew* graphic Novel. After analyzing the data of *Fagin the Jew* by using prejudice theory by Allport, it can be concluded that the graphic novel contain four scales of prejudice and the defense as the response to prejudice by its victims. It is depicted by gentiles action towards Jewish characters that can be classified using the scale of prejudice by Allport. This action begins with the harmless action that is antilocution. This is the first scale with the less hostility compared to others. The second scale is avoidance, the third scale is discrimination, and followed by physical attack and extermination. These scales is developed from the less harmful to the worst according to Gordon Allport's theory. However, the act of extermination is not shown within this story. The racism act stops at the level of murdering a person individually or physical attack. Meanwhile, the act of extermination or mass murdered happens in a group of people which belong to a particular race or ethnic.

The act of prejudice that the Jewish characters get in this novel also leads to the defense of the ego in responding to the prejudice they got. Ego defensiveness will frequently be found among members of groups that are set off for ridicule, disparagement and discrimination. Some ego defense as a form of prejudice response can be found in various forms, including denial of membership, slyness and cunning and enhanced striving. In each group that was persecuted, more than one ego defense could be found, depending on the situation where the prejudice victim was.

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