**The depiction of oppression in Persepolis**

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Marjane Satrapi's graphic novel Persepolis explores the dark period of Iran's Islamic Revolution through the lens of her own adolescence and young adulthood. Within the pages of this work, Satrapi not only narrates her personal experiences, but also shines light on the oppression, sacrifices, and silencing that various social groups in Iranian society face. Satrapi utilises this graphic novel to highlight these voices that are frequently silenced or neglected. These voices include atheist individuals such as her parents, nationalists, Muslims, and those who wish to rebel against the government.

At the heart of Persepolis is Satrapi's own coming-of-age story in an oppressive state. As a young girl growing up in Iran, Satrapi deals with the harsh religious demands enforced by the Islamic government, which seeks to control all aspects of women's lives. Satrapi's story and illustrations powerfully illustrate the marginalisation of women in Iranian culture, who are required to follow extremely strict dress standards and endure harsh restrictions on their freedoms. The novel's graphic format enables Satrapi to clearly portray the physical and emotional limits that women experience, emphasising the broad extent of their marginalisation within Iranian culture. Satrapi also dives into the stories of atheists, like her parents, who endure persecution and imprisonment for their political views. Despite their efforts to shield her from the terrible reality of the regime, Satrapi is keenly aware of her parents' struggles in resisting oppression. Through moving images and speech, Satrapi highlights the muffled voices of atheists who are shunned and marginalised for refusing to comply to the dictates of religion (p. 66). Satrapi uses the graphic novel genre to illustrate her parents' inside distress as they navigate the difficulties of life under a totalitarian system, humanising their struggle and emphasising the injustices they encounter.

In addition to atheists, Satrapi highlights the hardships of nationalists and Muslims who dare to oppose the repressive dictatorship. Through the execution of a sister of a nationalist (not the nationalist himself) (Page 66), Satrapi emphasises the harsh consequences for those who dare to disagree. Similarly, the arrest and torture of family friends and acquaintances serve as a harsh reminder of the regime's constant efforts to suppress the opposition and maintain control (Pages 31–66). By depicting the experiences of people from various backgrounds, Satrapi effectively depicts the far-reaching impact of oppression on Iranian society, regardless of political or religious beliefs.

Throughout Persepolis, Satrapi uses graphic book practices to express the realities of marginalised populations in a vivid and profound way. Satrapi's use of text and art helps her stir up strong emotions while also conveying complicated concepts with clarity. Furthermore, the choice of black-and-white drawings gives the story a sense of urgency and intensity, portraying the characters' harsh realities and emphasising the severity of their difficulties (Page 14). Satrapi's creative use of visual storytelling allows readers to immerse themselves in the real experiences of those oppressed and repressed by the dictatorship.

In real life, the issues depicted in Persepolis are linked to historical and ongoing movements against oppression and totalitarian regimes around the world. Satrapi's portrayal of people dealing with political persecution, religious oppression, and societal constraints resonates with the realities of marginalised communities across countries and time periods. For example, the struggles of atheists like Satrapi's parents are similar to those of activists and political objectors in other authoritarian regimes, such as those ruled by communists in Eastern Europe. Similarly, the persecution of nationalists and Muslims at Persepolis exemplifies wider patterns of oppression by governments against minority groups seeking independence or opposing official ideology. By highlighting these real-life parallels, Satrapi's art transcends its specific historical context to encourage readers to consider the essential human longing for freedom and equality face of injustice.

In conclusion, Marjane Satrapi's Persepolis is a strong monument to the marginalised, excluded, and silenced voices in Iranian society during the Islamic revolution. Satrapi's emotional narrative and striking graphics shed light on the hardships of women, atheists, nationalists, and Muslims alike, emphasising the widespread effects of oppression and the resilience of those who dare to resist. Persepolis is a painful reminder of the need of lifting marginalised voices and confronting oppressive systems wherever they exist, urging readers to confront injustice and work for a more fair society.

References (Sources from the book):

* **Page 66**: The brutal murder of a revolutionary's sister by a few of the religious.  
  Afbeelding met Menselijk gezicht, kleding, tekening, schets

  Automatisch gegenereerde beschrijving
* **Page 14**: People locked in a burning cinema while the police is withholding the rescuers.  
  Afbeelding met strip, schets, tekening, tekenfilm

  Automatisch gegenereerde beschrijving  
  **Page 31**: Protesting by honoring the deceased martyrs.Afbeelding met strip, kleding, person, tekenfilm

  Automatisch gegenereerde beschrijving