

Question 1: Identify some of the forms intolerance can take, and discuss how its effects on both the victims and the intolerant are presented in at least two of the works you have studied.

Both Marjane Satrapi, author of Persepolis (Volume 1) and Arthur Miller, playwright of A View From the Bridge, present different forms of intolerance and their effects on both the victims and the intolerant in their works. In Persepolis, a graphic memoir that was first published in serial form in France in 2000, Satrapi employs an artistically canny licence in detailing her growing up in a Marxist, secular and progressive household. She illustrates her maturation from childhood to adulthood which coincided with the pivotal overthrow of Shah Reza Pahlavi, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and the eight-year Iran-Iraq War. In Persepolis, Satrapi aims to dispel any misconceptions readers, particularly Western readers, may have about Iran and Iranians associated with 'fundamentalism, fanaticism and terrorism' (preface). Meanwhile, A View From the Bridge, a play written and published in 1955 during the Cold War, interweaves Miller's own observations and first-hand interactions with longshoremen working along the Brooklyn Docks in Red Hook, New York, giving the audience an insight into the rampant Italian immigration to Brooklyn in pursuit of the American Dream during the 1950s. Through A View From the Bridge Miller aims to explore an individual's relationship with his or her community, highlighting the capacity of an ordinary man to be subjected to a tragic downfall. While in both works there are forms of intolerance that stem from the time period of conformity and patriarchal societies in which both works are set, in Persepolis they are more directly related to the external conflict of war, whereas in A View From the Bridge, they are amplified by the dichotomy between two different cultural schools of thought; specifically, Sicilian American codes of justice versus American law. Although both texts are different genres, both Satrapi and Miller present forms of intolerance with regard to the restricted role of women in society, the threat of power, and injustice.

In Persepolis, Satrapi highlights the restriction of females caused by the external oppression of the Islamic regime. Despite the fact that Marjane and her mother, Taji, are considered victims of the regime's intolerance, they effectively are portrayed as intolerant as they reject the stereotypical roles of females imposed on them. In 'The Veil', Taji actively protests and takes part in the political demonstration despite the dangers associated with it, showing how females, too, can break free from rather passive roles and actively protest. Inspired by Taji's feminist political perspective, Marjane aspires (unrealistically) to take on traditionally male roles such as becoming a prophet and a scientist. In 'The Trip', Marjane states how she 'wanted to be an educated, liberal woman' like Marie Curie, despite the Islamic regime's ban on tertiary education for women. Marjane's aspiration to be educated, despite the Islamic regime forbidding it, clearly underscores her intolerance of the Iranian authorities. However, this is juxtaposed with the next frame which illustrates Marjane lying down on her bed, lamenting 'Misery! At the same age Marie Curie first went to France to study, I'll probably have ten children...' as emanata also portrays her crying. This illustrates how Marjane quickly transitions from intolerant to the victim of intolerance, as her comparison with Marie Curie highlights the societal constraints Iranian women faced. The hyperbole of 'ten children' also shows how Marjane feels

destined to become a mother. In this way, *Satrapa* illustrates how even the intolerant may inevitably be destined to become victims of external oppression.

In a similar way, in *A View From the Bridge*, Miller shows the intolerance and restrictions of females in society, not only brought into prominence by the social and cultural norms of 1950's America, but also within the domestic sphere of the home. However, in contrast to Marjane, Beatrice is already fulfilling her role as Eddie's wife. Whilst Beatrice is evidently a victim of patriarchal intolerance, she too, like Marjane and Taji, attempts to challenge the stereotypical and submissive roles of females. Whilst other characters in the play often evade explicitly saying what they actually mean, Beatrice is, by contrast, rather forward and forthcoming as she confronts Eddie about their troubled sexual relationship, saying 'when am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?' The 1950s audience would probably be shocked by this exclamation, as women would be expected to accommodate to their husbands rather than reveal intolerance with their circumstance. However, it is also clear that Beatrice's emphasis on her role as 'a wife' portrays her as a victim who is unable to escape from patriarchal society's intolerance of females attempting to challenge their husbands, which is continuously emphasised by Eddie throughout the play.

In *Persepolis*, *Satrapa* shows how the Islamic regime's intolerance of revolt and threat may not only victimise those who have been intolerant to the regime, but also closed and personal ones. In 'The Sheep' as the Islamic regime seeks to assassinate outspoken critics, Uncle Anoosh continues to remain intolerant by saying 'everything will be alright!' However, when it is clear that he will be their next target, he laments 'everything will be alright...' The use of punctuation indicates a change in tone as he shifts from the optimistic exclamation to the more uncertain and downcast ellipsis. At the same time, he is shown to have changed clothes from white to black. His body stance alters too, and he is no longer shown to be confident and upright in posture. These transitions signal the change that occurs as Anoosh moves from an intolerant critic of the Islamic regime to a victim. Anoosh, inevitably, is assassinated, and Marjane is portrayed as victimised as she shouts at God, 'shut up you! Get out of my life!!' Through such a blasphemous and controversial rejection of God, *Satrapa* aims to show that the intolerance of the regime victimises its targets but also others who must watch them suffer. The jagged speech bubble and exclamation marks clearly convey Marjane's immense despair as she becomes increasingly intolerant of the regime as the novel develops.

In *A View From the Bridge*, Miller shows how the intolerance of the threat of power between males in a domestic household setting. These stem from Eddie assuming the role of patriarch and 'alpha-male' as well as his incestuous desire towards Catherine. Miller ends Act 1 with a climax in dramatic tension when Eddie, Catherine, Beatrice, Rodolpho, and Marco are all in the domestic setting of the living room, interweaving elements of Greek Tragedy such as the unity of place. Eddie's intolerance in this scene is clear. Rodolpho says to Catherine 'dance, Catherine. Come', and the stage directions indicate that he takes her by the hand. Whilst they dance, the stage directions show Eddie deep in thought and he sits on a chair, unhappy and intolerant at the turn of events. Marco, however, is in turn unhappy with Eddie's bullying of Rodolpho, and he shows his intolerance indicated in stage

directions. Marco 'looks down' at Eddie before taking a chair and lifting it 'like a weapon' over Eddie's head. This dramatic simile, the use of proxemics and the inclusion of realistic props such as the chair amplify the tension the audience feel at the curtain. The conflict between Marco and Eddie is clear. Eddie initially intolerant of Rodolpho is now the victim of Marco's intolerance.

Lastly, in Persepolis, Satrapi illustrates the regime's intolerance of lower social classes in Iran, although unlike other characters, it is only Marjane who is portrayed to be obviously intolerant of the regime's injustice. In 'The Letter', in an attempt to bridge the gap between social classes, Marjane helps Mehri, her maid, to write a letter to Hossein, a neighbour Mehri is in love with. However, when the relationship is stopped by Eby, Marjane's father, Mehri and Marjane are both drawn lying on the same bed and Marjane says 'we were not in the same social class but at least we were in the same bed'. The use of the collective pronoun 'we' indicates that Marjane is trying to create some sense of unity between them. Moreover, the repetition of 'same' shows how Marjane regards them as equals despite their difference in social status. This episode shows the inevitability of Mehri remaining a victim of class intolerance, Marjane is intolerant of such class-based prejudice, further revealed when Marjane encourages Mehri to protest at the Black Friday Massacre.

In A View From the Bridge, Miller explores the intolerance of opposing cultures, evident in the conflict between Sicilian American codes of justice and the American law. From the play's prologue, Mr Alfieri, the Red Hook lawyer, provides the audience with insight into the intolerance and conflict that govern the play, like a Greek chorus. Having migrated from Sicily to Red Hook when he was twenty-five years old, he recognizes the conflict between the two competing worldviews, manifested in the two characters of Marco and Rodolpho. As the play concludes, Mr Alfieri 'turns to the audience' and says 'it is better to settle for half'. At the beginning of the play, he foreshadows the cathartic moment of Eddie's death when he says, metaphorically, that 'he watched it run its bloody course'. Both at the beginning and culmination of the play, the audience sees Mr Alfieri is a rational bystander. His role enables him an elevated degree of insight, highlighting how intolerance leads to victimisation and tragic death.

In conclusion, both Satrapi and Miller present different forms of intolerance. Although the nature of intolerance, the societies, and genres differ, there may be a sense that intolerance is a human universal. If this is accurate, it may be further claimed that although intolerance can be justified, the outcome of intolerance for individuals is not generally positive. Moreover, individuals are neither simply intolerant or the victims of intolerance. Their role changes, depending on circumstance.