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What does the veil mean

The book *“The complete Persepolis”* by *Marjane Satrapi* contains two chapters that are both titled “the Veil”, both chapters represent different times; one in which she is a young child still dependant on her family and then later on in the book where you reach the “the veil” again is when she is a young adult living by herself in a different country but in both instances of Marji’s life the veil adequately represent the time of her life that she is going through due to the homonyms of the word veil. The first chapter in *“The complete Persepolis”* by *Marjane Satrapi* the veil represents obedience and compliance, Marji’s life is full of trying to go against the veil of society that she has been born into. In the other chapter titled “The Veil” starting on page 233 the veil represents a mask that Marji’s is wearing in order to fit into society that she recently has entered. In these two Chapters Marji tries to find her place within the veil and outside of the veil while still trying to go through the transition from a young girl into a young adult while trying to understand what it truly means to be proud of who you are and where you came from. We see the struggle against the veil in the beginning with a handful of examples such as the first page and also towards the end of the book where she starts to realize what she truly is trying so hard to go against.

In chapter one of *“The complete Persepolis”* by *Marjane Satrapi* the first thing you notice is the title called “The Veil”. At first glance when you think of a veil you think of cover you wear on your wedding day, but as you continue to read the contents of the first page you start to understand where the title came from and it wasn't just because that is when Marji is first introduced to us wearing a veil or Marji mentioning the fact that the veil is now mandatory but at the last box of the first page we get a hint as to what the author means by the veil. Compliance. Marji makes a comment to the reader “ We didn’t really like to wear the veil, especially since we didn't understand why we had to.”(p.3 *Marjane Satrapi*) this is the first sign of compliance that Marji shows within the chapter of the veil, she admits to not knowing why she must wear the veil and that she even dislikes wearing the veil but she still wears it as you can see in the first two frames of page. As we continue on to the next page in the chapter of “The veil” Marji describes all the changes that happen in her life as a child, starting with the closing of bilingual schools and the separate classes the boys and girls now have to take and without much protest she accepts the fate of her situation without any means to fight back against what's happening or question; she accept her situation with a simple “ And that was that”(p.4 *Marjane Satrapi*) Marji compliance with her current life style is another reference to the chapter named “The veil”. The title “The veil” has another meaning for this chapter, obedience. “ The veil” can also mean for this chapter obedience, obedience in knowing that whatever order,rule, or law society has created must be followed. Marj first witnessed “The veil[s]” obedience after her mother was photographed by a german journalist and her picture was published in the European newspaper and one in Iran, because of how society viewed Marj mother after the magazine was published Marji mother had to dye her hair and wear dark glasses for a long time. By making Marji's mother an outcast in society it not only made an example of Marji mother but made Majis mother an outcast in

society and Marji could see the effect of her mothers actions once the damage had been done.

“The veil” shows that any retaliation or opposition wouldnt be tolerated in society and it would cause backlash from the community. As we continue reading we see another page where the

“The veil” shows its form of obedience when Marji questions why the maid does not sit with her family at the dinner table. Marji questions the logic behind not having the maid sit with them to eat but she doesn't pose the question to her parents, instead she accepts the situation for what it is because that is how it's always been for her and her family. Same way with the fact that her family drives a Cadillac and that ist normal even though Cadillacs are an expensive type of car.

Towards the end of the chapter of “The veil” we see Marji trying to break the social norm and say that she wants to become a prophet; she says “I wanted to be justice, love and the wrath of god all in one”(p. 9 *Marjane Satrapi*) that was the kind of prophet she wanted to be but when she told her classmates about what she wanted to be when she grew up they all laughed at her and called her crazy, the teacher even had a meeting with her parents to discuss what Marji wanted to become when she grows up. Knowing the reaction that society would say if she said she wanted to be a Prophet in public would do to her family after witnessing what going against society did to her mother, Marji when asked by her parents what she wanted to be when she grew up instead of saying a prophet she says instead “ I want to be a Doctor”(p.9 *Marjane Satrapi*). “The veil” in the beginning of Marji shows a veil of obedience and compliance in Marji childhood showing that her childhood was filled with this constant state of either which is a very different compared to “The veil” she encounters during the latter half of “*The complete Persepolis*”. The meaning of this can be because the author is trying to make the differences and the similarities between the two chapters called “The veil” very apparent.

The second time we are introduced to a chapter called “The veil” is the start of page 233, and this is during Marijs young adult phase of her life. Where she is in a new country with new friends and a different society in which she believes she can be anything she wants to be. “The veil” in this chapter also has a significant meaning to it but it is not the same as “The veil” at the beginning of the story, this veils meaning is that of a mask; in Marjis case shes taking off her mask and accepting who she truly is and not forcing herself to become what the new society's idea of what she should be. Marji believed that she was an adult that was able to survive on her own since she had stated more than once throughout the story that she had lived through a war. But at the beginning of the chapter of “The veil” within the last box we can see Marji regret not having her family with her when she truly needs them ,” where was my mother to stroke my hair... Where was my father to punish this boy who dared to hurt his daughter?”(p.233 *Marjane Satrapi*) This is the start where Marji starts to take off the mask she's been wearing while she's been away from her parents, this is where she comes to realise what she really wants in her life and her perspective starts to shift. She became everything her boyfriend wanted her to be and in the end it wasn't good enough for him, she went against everything she was taught as a child and wanted to live for her boyfriend which she realises was a mistake “ How could i have been so blind? What relationship?What love?...”(p.237 *Marjane Satrapi*) Marji realizes that she was a fool for living for someone else and not for herself. She then spends the winter just trying to get by completely throwing away her pride and the need to fit into society's definition of what she should be; Marji slept on the ground and also ate other peoples leftover food just to survive. In this new society where Marji had worn her mask all the time she came to understand that she doesn't have anyone to call on for help, she was truly alone and that is what finally drives the idea of getting rid of the mask. As you get to the end of the chapter we notice that Marji

completely abandons the mask she's been wearing in order for her to fit into society but instead puts on a veil, since she is planning to go home, Marji realises that even if she was to return home in shame she would rather be happy at home than have “Individual and social liberties” (p.245 *Marjane Satrapi*), Marji determines that if this is what it cost to have these social and individual liberties she doesn't want them because in the end it is her happiness that she is sacrificing in order to achieve these things. “The veil” in this chapter meaning mask and the “The veil” in the first chapter are two sides of the same meaning, the author shows how both sides are equally damaging no matter which side you choose but with whichever decision you choose you should be happy with that decision.

In conclusion “*The complete Persepolis*” by *Marjane Satrapi* contains two chapters that are both titled “the Veil”, both chapters represent different times of Marji life in which she experiences and goes through different life lessons at different ages; one in which Marji is a young child still dependant on her family and then further on in the book where you reach the “the veil” again is when she is a young adult living alone away from he family. Within the first chapter of “*The complete Persepolis*” by *Marjane Satrapi* the veil we can see how “The veil” represents obedience and compliance, In the other chapter titled “The Veil” starting on page 233 the veil represents a mask that Marji’s is wearing in order to fit into society that she recently has entered. In these two Chapters Marji tries to find her place within the veil and outside of the veil while still trying to go through the transition from a young girl into a young adult but at the end of second “The veil” we see that even though she did struggle to become who she was in society it wasn't worth it to her, the person who she had become she was not proud of.

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Referencne:

“The complete Persepolis” by Marjane Satrapi