
The Theme Of Oppression in Persepolis

Introduction

The Islamic Revolution is a historic event that is often portrayed in many inaccurate stories. Marjane Satrapi, the author of Persepolis shares with her readers a true insight of not just what the Islamic Revolution was but what it was like to live in Iran during this time. Throughout her story, Persepolis Marjane shares multiple events that happen throughout her life from ages ten to fourteen. Throughout these events, she presents different conflicts and problems that happen with her life and the people around her. Infiltrated in these problems are themes that she spreads out through the whole novel. Ranging from Patriotism to Religious Fundamentals Marjane shows how each theme changes through time and how important each theme becomes throughout the novel. One of the themes being targeted is oppression, which is by definition prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control. Oppression is shown in multiple ways throughout the story through the graphics and quotes. One way oppression showed up in the novel is involving Marjane's own life.

Oppression in Marjane's Personal Life

Marjane's life takes many twists and turns throughout the story causing her life to go from her highest peaks to her lowest peaks. One of the causes of this is witnessing oppression in her own personal life. The first time Marjane really felt oppression towards her was when she was about ten and she and Mehri went to demonstrate to keep the republic alive. The day that they went happened to be Black Friday which is the one day they shouldn't have gone because many demonstrators were killed by who many says was the Israeli Soldiers. When Marjane's mother found out that they went she was so furious that she slapped both of them in the face. When this happened Marjane stated, " But in fact, it was really our own kind who had attacked us." What Marjane is saying here is that even though they weren't shot or hurt at the demonstration they were still by their own kind, her mother which hurt because she believed she was standing up for the right cause. Another time of oppression in Marjane's personal life is when she is a little bit older and her mother came home crying. When Marjane's mother came home she was crying because she said that "two bastards" came up and insulted her. The men had said to her, "That woman like you should be pushed up against a wall and fucked, and then thrown in the garbage and that if I didn't want that to happen, I should wear the veil." This is a big event in Marjane's life because the two men were men of her own kind that started treating women like her mother like garbage just because she's not a fundamentalist woman and doesn't wear the veil. This event really affects Marjane's mother making her feel unsafe and disgusting in her own neighborhood because people are saying it's the woman's fault for being attacked because they're showing their hair. Lastly, oppression is shown in Marjane's personal life when she's fourteen and gets caught for wearing symbols of decadence. When she got caught wearing these symbols she started to get interrogated by Fundamentalist women. The woman wanted to take Marjane and detain her and punish her by whipping her or any other way to make her change her ways. When she got home she didn't tell her mom because she wouldn't to her freedom going out and not lose it because she was being her own person.

Oppression in the World

Oppression is also shown not just in her personal life but also in the world around her. One of the multiple ways oppression is shown around her is with Niloufar. Niloufar was a communist that the government was looking for. Khosro tried to keep her safe so she could live her life because she was only eighteen. Unfortunately, Khosro got spotted through a window and was executed. Another event of oppression around Marjane's life is the keys. The keys were little plastic keys that were given to the poor class young boys promising them a better future. The paradise that was promised them was, " Plenty of food, women, and houses made of gold and diamonds." Many of the children never got this because many of them were killed on minefields with the key still around their necks.

Graphical Means of Showing Oppression

Lastly throughout the novel oppression was shown by the graphics on the pages. The graphics really had a deeper meaning than they appear when you first look at them. One example of an oppression graphic is the graphic of the kids having the keys tied around their necks still as they're being blown away on the minefield. This graphic has a deeper saying because, in the graphic under it, it shows higher class kids having a party and enjoying themselves while the poor kids are dying. The deep part of the graphic is one of the kids dancing at the party has the same body form as a little kid dying in the war which shows the two different lives going on at once. Another graphic showing oppression is of a demonstration. The graphic shows the demonstration going well until everyone breaks out and starts turning on each other and hitting each other with bats. That was the first time Marjane really saw actual violence with her eyes because the graphic shows a girl getting stabbed in the leg by their own people. This was the last demonstration that Marjane and her parents went to.

Conclusion

Oppression was a major theme going on during this time that Marjane had to witness a lot of or live around. Marjane's life and many other people's lives were affected by oppression and what it did to the world around them. That is one thing Marjane's story, *Persepolis*, brought; it brought feelings and emotions through actual people of the Islamic Revolution.