

# [Persepolis analysis essay](https://assignbuster.com/persepolis-analysis-essay/)

The novel, Persepolis, tells the tale of young Marjane Satrapi, who is a young girl growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution. In my essay I will examine how the author, Marjane Satrapi, tells her own story of growing up during the Islamic revolution through pictures. Satrapi uses pictures to depict her life as she matures first through her childhood, then through her teenager years into becoming an adult, and finally shows how she lives out her adult life and when she tries to eventually come home. She does this in a comic book format, which there are believed to be a few reasons why she had done this.

Some believe she has done this in order to provide a somewhat “ comic relief” to the Iran-Iraq war. Also some believe that she was trying to make it easier to read in order to better inform people of other countrys what she had gone through growing up in Iran during this time. But who knows really, it’s possible she just felt that’s how she could best describe the horrific events of her life, through the use of art and pictures. Satrapi wirtes the book as if she is writing an autobiography, and with any good autobiography she starts the book during the years of her childhood.

She is a very quick learner and her parents learn at an early age that the way she thinks is much more advanced than the rest of the kids her age. On the very first page you can see how Satrapi uses imagery to show how the veil that all girls are forced to wear at this time is a sign a sign of evil. This is seen as a sign of evil in Satrapi’s eyes because in one of the first slides you see a picture of the class and they all look the same due to all the girls having to wear this veil.

This makes all of the them sad because of course younger kids love to express their individuality, but of course now they cant due to this cloth they must have draped over them at all times. All of the kids in school were very confused as to why they even had to wear this silly thing. Satrapi is almost poking fun at the idea of the veil when she draws the scene of all the kids in school at what it looks to be recess just playing around with their veils as if they were toys. One girl is using her veil to cover her face and she says,” Ooh!

I’m the monster of darkness”(Satrapi 3), another girl is choking another girl with her veil saying “ Execution in the name of freedom”, and one other girl is ripping off her veil just because its too hot out. This scene shows how Satrapi and other kids her age were very innocent and naive when the revolution first took place. To the government and society the veil is a major religious symbol that must be taken seriously, but of course as kids they don’t really know any better so they use it as a play thing. On page seven we first learn of Satrapi’s visions that she is the last prophet.

Growing up she imagines herself as a prophet that has been brought to the earth to help people, and the one thing she wants to do is make it so that the elderly do not feel pain specifically her grandmother, who she confides in often. This is also when her visions with God are first introduced. In her very first image she is seen talking to god in her bed at night all alone. She feels guilty towards God because she told her parents that she really wanted to be a doctor when they questioned her about why she wanted to be a prophet.

She is trying to convince God that she still has her religious faith and desire to be a prophet, but she doesn’t want her parents to know because she thinks they’ll possibly try to stop her. This scene shows how naive but yet very ambitious Satrapi is at such a young age already. She says she wants to be justice, love, and the wrath of God all in one, but yet as she grows up she realizes how hard of a task that really is. Her father is a very intelligent man and wants Satrapi to be educated as well so he buys her many books which is how she learns about the world very early in her life.

Her favorite book is called Dialectic Materialism, which is a very intellectual book for a girl her age. An important thing to notice is her vision of Karl Marx looks very similar to her vision of what she portrays God to look like. I think this is because she is learning how different governments work from reading and she favors Marx’s ideas of socialism so he is seen as another comforting character with a large beard, just like God, through Marji’s eyes. Growing up through her childhood and into her teenager years Marjane is seen as a quite rebellious character.

Satrapi first learns of the wrath of the revolution through a journalist who was a friend of Marji’s parents. He had just came from prison as a “ political prisoner” and told the parents of the terrible torturing the prisoners went through. The one scene is a picture of their one friend Ahmadi getting whipped until he had scars all over his back, burned with an iron, and eventually cut up into pieces all because he wouldn’t tell as to where the other protestors were. It even cuts to Marji thinking to herself thinking like, wow I didn’t even know that you could use that appliance (the iron) iron for torture.

This shows that she is still naive but slowly learning what is going on around her. She learns that her Uncle Anoosh was a real hero to her because he had gotten caught and went to prison which makes him more of a hero to her than her father so she immediately falls in love with this man. She had never met her uncle because he had been in prison almost her whole life and when she does she immediately falls in love with him and wants to know his whole life story. He tells her a lot about the war and what went on through his eyes.

He tells her how he put on a disguise to go home but they caught him and threw him in prison. She now loves her uncle very much because he told her more than her parents probably would have liked. Even the next day when he is all of a sudden gone you see her face has a huge look of surprise on it when her parents give her the normal story about he had to go on a trip. This is because she doesn’t know the truth of what happened to him but she is suspicious because she knows they are lying to her.

She learns through the newspaper that he had been brought back to prison and it cuts to a scene where she is very angry at god for letting something bad happen to someone she thought was such a good person. This is where she starts to lose her own religious faith because she doesn’t know how to explain the bad events of the war to herself. Then the town is bombed and the war between Iraq and Iran is officially started. In the chapter about the key you learn about what Marji thinks about the government recruiting kids to go to war.

Her parents are absolutely against the whole idea when they learn that boys are receiving keys in order to join the war effort. The government tells them that they are keys to paradise for if they die they will have plenty of food, women, and riches in paradise. On the one page the top scene depicts a group of boys getting blown up in a mine field, and of course they are all wearing their keys around their necks. This is showing literally thousands of children who dying for what they were promised would be a better life, but in reality they had no way of knowing what would happen to them.

On that same page Satrapi draws a scene where it is her going to her first real party with others. She is dancing and having a great time because she loves her outfit, which was punk rock at the time, and she is with all her friends. It is funny how these two images are polar opposites when it comes to emotional reactions but she has them right next to each other and the characters are almost doing the same movements. This is to show how Satrapi was trying to cope with the war through social behaviors because she didn’t want to deal with the “ real world” and what was going on.

Marjane is very rebellious in school as well. At the time any foreign music, clothes, and pretty much other cultures were banned by the government. Marjane was a girl who was very opinionated and so when her parents left the country one time they brought her back some posters, a pair of nike sneakers, and a Michael Jackson pin. The one scene depicts her getting stopped in the road by the guardians of the revolution. Their job was to stop everyone who seemed out of place and explain to them the duties of Muslim women. Of course Marji was seen wearing all her foreign stuff and they questioned her about everything.

They asked her if she was ashamed to be wearing such tight jeans, and they even called her a whore because her veil was not low enough. Her parents eventually become scared for their daughter’s life because she had become quite the rebellion in school so they decide to send her to a French school in Austria. She is scared at first because she is in a new environment with no family or friends but of course she adapts and starts to make friends when they notice she is smart. In the one chapter she is seen trying to pee standing up like a man.

She does this because the book she is reading says that it changes your perception on life. It is disgusting to her so she sits down and makes the realization that its not that easy. She even says to herself, ” Before learning to urinate like a man, I needed to learn to become a liberated and emancipated woman”( Satrapi 175). This is when she is learning that she can be smart and a woman even though it is hard in the world she lives in. After living in Vienna for a few years she wanted to go back to her hometown where she grew up because she had run out of places to stay.

She does and loves being home with her family but she comes back to find everything is different because of the war. The one scene shows her walking through the streets with skulls underneath. They look almost as if she is walking through a cemetery because many of the street names were names of martyrs. She likes being home again but she eventually became very depressed with her life so she starts to see a therapist. She does a self transformation on her life and becomes much happier again.

On page 275 you can even see she says she became a sophisticated woman because she has taken up exercise. She has even become an aerobics instructor. Satrapi eventually turns into a woman by the end of the book but she is still against the Iranian government because she thinks it favors men. In the one scene she points out a law to her friend involving murder that showed how much gender inequality there was in their society. She is so fed up she gets a visa to leave the country and lives out the rest of her life in an out of the country art school, and returning to Iran only once or twice more.