

GROUP 1: IMAGE ON POLITICAL CHANGE IN IRAN (1979)


Satrapi, Marjane. Image. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, 78. New York: Pantheon Books, 2003. <http://vickitheviking.blogspot.com/2013/04/book-review-persepolis.html>.

Questions for Discussion:

- What is happening in the image?
- What perspectives do the parents of the girl above hold about political involvement? What perspectives do the men in the last frame hold?
- What facts about the Iranian revolution might contextualize the comic by Marjane Satrapi?
- What further questions are you left with?

For more background on the 1979 Iranian Revolution, educators and students can look at the following article by Roger Cohen from *New York Times Up Front, a News Magazine for Teens*:

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/features/index.asp?article=fog18o6_TP_Iran

GROUP 2: EXCERPT FROM NAGUIB MAHFOUZ’S BOOK *MIDAQ ALLEY*
(WRITTEN IN ARABIC IN 1947 AND SET IN 1940S EGYPT)

“In spite of her fantasies of wealth, [Hamida] was not unaware of her situation. Indeed, she remembered a girl in Sanadiqiya Street who was even poorer than she. Then fortune sent a rich contractor who transported her from her miserable hovel to a fairy-tale life. What was to prevent good fortune from smiling twice in their quarter? This ambition of hers, however, was limited to her familiar world, which ended at Queen Farida Square. She knew nothing of life beyond it.

In the distance, she saw some of the factory girls approaching her. She hurried toward them; her unpleasant thoughts were now replaced by a smile on her face. In the midst of their greetings and chattering, Hamida gazed searchingly at their faces and clothes, envying them their freedom and obvious prosperity. They were girls from the Darasa district, who, taking advantage of wartime employment opportunities, ignored custom and tradition and now worked in public places just like the Jewish women. They had gone into factory work exhausted, emaciated, and destitute. Soon remarkable changes were noticeable: their once undernourished bodies filled out and seemed to radiate a healthy pride and vitality. They imitated the Jewish girls by paying attention to their appearance and in keeping slim. Some even used unaccustomed language and did not hesitate to walk arm in arm and stroll about the streets of illicit love. They exuded an air of boldness and secret knowledge.

As for Hamida, her age and ignorance had deprived her of their opportunities. She joined their laughter with a false sincerity, all the while envy nibbling at her. She did not hesitate to criticize them, even though in fun. This girl’s frock, for instance, was too short and immodest, while that one’s was simply in bad taste. A third girl was too obvious, the way she stared at men... No doubt these encounters were one of the roots of her constant rebelliousness, but they were also her main source of diversion in the long days filled with boredom and quarrels.”

Excerpt from Mahfouz, Naguib. *Midaq Alley*. New York: Anchor, 1992.
[http://online.sfsu.edu/mroozbeh/CLASS/h-n5/Mahfouz, Naguib - Midaq Alley-1.pdf](http://online.sfsu.edu/mroozbeh/CLASS/h-n5/Mahfouz,%20Naguib%20-%20Midaq%20Alley-1.pdf).

Naguib Mahfouz (1911-2006) was an Egyptian writer who wrote more than 30 novels, hundreds of short stories, and numerous plays and movie scripts. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988. *Midaq Alley* is the English translation of his novel *Zuqāq al-Midaq*, which was originally written in Arabic and has been translated into over 15 languages.

Questions for Discussion:

- What do we learn about the different options available to women in 1940s Egypt from this excerpt?
- What do we learn from this short excerpt about the different class backgrounds of the women mentioned?
- What further questions are you left with?

GROUP 3: IMAGES FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Background information: The National Ministry of Education was established in the Ottoman Empire in 1857. Education for all children (boys and girls) became compulsory in 1869.

Image A: Women's Teachers College. Photo taken between 1880-1893, Ottoman Empire



Frères, Abdullah. 1880-1893. Photograph. *Women's teachers college*. Library of Congress Online Database. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ahii/item/2001700008/>.

Image B: Private School Students, Ottoman Empire. Photo taken between 1880-1893 (Istanbul, Ottoman Empire)



Frères, Abdullah. 1880-1893. Photograph. *Students, private school Mekteb-i Hamidi-yi*. Library of Congress Online Database. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ahii/item/2001696001/>.

Image C: Group photograph of the Students of the Mirgûn Middle School for Girls. Photo taken between 1880-1893 (Ottoman Empire)



Frères, Abdullah. 1880-1893. Photograph. *Group photograph of the students of the Mirgûn (Emirgân) middle school for girls.* Library of Congress Online Database
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ahii/item/2002716687/>.

Questions for Discussion:

- What do we learn from these three images about the educational opportunities for girls during the Ottoman Empire (1299-1923)?
- How does education contribute to society?
- What further questions are you left with?