Discussion 5

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# Question 1

## How did the European conquest, “Scramble for Africa”, impact Baba’s life?

The European conquest turned life upside down for Baba, an African woman from Nigeria. Most Africans living outside the port cities had little to no idea what they should expect from the European invading their native lands. Their colonial authority was foreign in unimaginative ways to the locals. While the response towards European rule greatly depended on the conditions of the affected area. It is worth mentioning here that slavery was a long-established tradition in the area, with Baba and her family losing considerable amounts of income when these slaves were taken away from Africa by the Europeans. However, this loss was more or less offset by a stark reduction in the taxes the African farmers had to pay to the local chiefs and officials (Pakenham, 2015)

# Question 2

## What is the symbol of the Veil in Modern Islam? How does the representation of the veil in Hughes book differ from Satrapi’s view in Persepolis?

According to Hughes & Hughes, (2015), veiling and seclusion of women in Islam are not enjoined in the Holy Quran. While one verse asks women to veil their bosoms and hide their ornaments, where the words ornaments may refer to everything except the hands and the feet, another tells them to draw their cloaks tightly around their bodies so they wouldn’t be recognized and annoyed. Seclusion, on the other hand, is meant to only be a practice that was asked of Muhammad’s wives, owing to their status as the wives of the Holy Prophet. However, this practice, courtesy of the prestige attached to it, was takes up by most upper-class ladies at the time. However, Satrapi’s view in Persepolis sees the veil imposed on the women as a symbol of conformity and obedience. The protagonist of the story, Marji, viewed it negatively, calling it the embodiment of Islamic cultural authenticity by Irani government, it was nothing more than a form of repression. She calls those complying with this form of repression as being blinded by tradition and follow the regime set by the government with no original thought of their own (Satrapi, 2008).

# References

Hughes, S. S., & Hughes, B. (2015). *Women in World History: v. 2: Readings from 1500 to the Present*. Routledge.

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Satrapi, M. (2008). *Persepolis I & II*. Random House.