

The rugmaker of mazar essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Analyses how an idea is developed in a text you are studying. In the text, *The Arguer of Mazda-e-Shari* an autobiography by Ninja Mozart and Robert Hillman, the main character, Ninja Mozart, through the tests and trails he faces in his life, develops the idea of identity. The idea of identity is a major issue for Ninja and is most apparent at times in Afghanistan, his time in the refugee camp of Whomever and even to the time when he is accepted into Australia where he struggles to adapt to the new culture.

In all three locations in which the text is set Ninja faces key ideas or problems, which in turn shape his identity. In Afghanistan, Ninja faces the insecurity of his homeland, the constant conflict and how his ethnicity and religion see the persecution of his race by the Taliban. In Whomever, Ninja no longer faces war on a daily basis, however many new problems arise. These included his feeling of having no identity within the centre, the uncertainty he feels around waiting for his visa to be accepted or denied and his actions in times of racial tension within the centre.

Finally, in Australia, he still grapples with issues around who he is and struggles to find a purpose in his life. In addition, Ninja's identity is challenged by his friendlessness and his struggles in adapting to the Australian culture. In Afghanistan, Ninja's identity is developed heavily; this occurs mostly because of the conflict that is all around him as he grows up. Ninja grew up in a time of serious unrest in Afghanistan, where the communist Russians were trying to gain power over the country and were meeting fierce opposition by the rebel fighters of the Mujahideen.

It was this conflict that caused the death of two family members in a stray rocket attack and left Ninja living a life of fear where he always finds himself wondering where the next rocket attack is going to come from. Ninja talks of this fear when he says " As I looked about me, how could I say that another rocket attack would not seek this house, even within seconds" . He also explains the insecurity he felt living in Afghanistan when he states " It was impossible to feel safe when battles could change course in a matter of hours".

It is this insecurity of his homeland that causes Nana's identity to be shaped into one that opposes violence and love peace, his love of peace can be seen through his words for I like peace. It is part of me". Throughout the text Ninja often states how much he dislikes violence for example when Ninja talks of guns he states " A gun has only one purpose, and that purpose will not build anything, but will only tear down what others have built". This disapproval of violence is in stark contrast to the commonly held views of Afghans males who are described, by Ninja, as " some of the most shrewd and fierce guerilla fighters anywhere in the world".

This fear of attack that brought about Nana's dislike for violence shows to the reader that the effects of war have shaped Nana's identity and despite the stereotype of Afghans male being a rebel fighter Ninja still keeps his identity as a peaceful person. Another event in Afghanistan that shaped Nana's identity was the persecution of the Hazard race by the Taliban. After the killing the leader of the Hazard and gaining access of Mazda-e-Shari, the Taliban take their revenge over the Hazard for winning a fight with the

Taliban in earlier years and also for being Shih's Islam instead of Sunnis Islam.

Their revenge takes the form of a massacre, with all Hazard men of fighting age being executed. Although Ninja had never picked up a gun to fight the Taliban he was a victim of this persecution. Ninja was captured, beaten and made to sit in a room of 40 other Hazard males, to his surprise he was released. It was evident that Ninja was surprised when he was released because he had earlier stated, " all of us in that room had expected to die". This event can show us the relationship between Nana's experience with the Taliban and his acceptance of others view.

Unlike the Taliban, Ninja does not put others down in fact he accepts them for example when Ninja talks of religion he says " Those ho honor other Gods to mine - peace to them, forever... ' would never raise a sword, never even a feather cushion against another man because of his religion, or because of his lack of religion". Through Nana's words we can see, that this experience with the Taliban has lead Ninja to develop his identity with acceptance in mind. For me, Nana's experiences in Afghanistan and he reacted to them are a prime example of how everyone should be.

I believe the only reason violence continues is because people hold on to grudges and anger and therefore retaliate if given the chance. Because Ninja moved on and did not pick up arms against the Taliban after he was beaten, he broke the circle of war and violence. I think that this was a very admirable action to take and if everyone took this approach I think there wouldn't be the amount of conflict we see today. Furthermore, Nana's identity is

developed in the Whomever Detention of Australia. This is mostly due to the hopelessness he faces in the centre.

Firstly his refugee status makes Ninja feel faceless and unidentifiable amongst all the other refugees. For Ninja he struggles to be happy in the centre and tastes this when he says “ it is difficult to be cheerful when I feel so powerless”. It also irritates him because he knows he is a good person who would never hurt a fly but it annoys him that the officials at the centre cannot see that straight away. This irritation is shown when he, at one time, wanted to yell out “ this is Ninja... He pays his taxes, he doesn't shoot people”.

Despite this feeling of being faceless, Ninja pushes through and works to act himself. This experience shows to us that Ninja must adapt his identity to be confident within himself and who he is because without it he will not make it through Whomever. The second identity development challenge faced in Whomever is the uncertainty and anxiousness he feels around the granting of his visa. Ninja left Afghanistan in search of a new better life he “ wanted to stand upon the soil where rockets did not land on my house in the middle of the night”.

So the fact he risks being sent back to Afghanistan and to the Taliban makes him very anxious. To add to that he is also surrounded by the anxious uncertainty of the other refugees and it is because of this that tension is very high; Ninja states “ we don't know what is going to happen... Cause we don't know, everyday is full of tension” This challenges Ninja's identity and the reader sees he must develop resilience and patience for without them he

risks losing his temper or even going insane, this is shown to us when Ninja states “ if you remain tense and worried for long enough, you begin to go mad”.

Finally, Whomever continues to shape Nana’s identity through racial tension and the methods he uses to solve it with. To help dissolve some of Nana’s hopelessness, he takes a Job in the kitchen. The canteen is a giant mixing bowl of culture and with mixing cultures comes racial tension especially when it comes to food, Ninja talks of the tension when he states “ there’s always trouble when the amounts are not exactly the same... Because there are people from five different countries are here”. Because Ninja serves the food he has the power to prevent the problems.

He puts aside any prejudice he has towards other races and acts even handedly when it come to handing out portions and in this way he stops any “ mini wars” occurring in the kitchen or in Nana’s words “ I call to them ‘ If you are still hungry, come for more! ‘ In this way we have peace”. This challenge shows us that Nana’s identity is developed to incorporate leadership qualities and troubleshooting and also backs up the idea that Ninja is accepting of all races and does not wish to persecute others based on their religion or beliefs.

Nana’s attitude in Whomever really inspires me to be a be a more positive person. I know that his life in Whomever would have been difficult, despite this I could see when I read was Ninja becoming more and more positive everyday which makes me realize that if he can remain positive in such a sad situation, then I should be able to too, seeing that my life is a lot more

enjoyable than it would have been in Whomever. Continuing on from Whomever, Ninja finds himself free in Australia. Here he must adapt to the circumstances of his new life and once again must develop who he is to settle into Australia.

The first challenge is a follow on from Whomever; Ninja still finds himself wondering who he is and what his purpose will be in the country of Australia. He never realized that once he had received a visa he would have to overcome a thousand more problems and he talks of this when he says “ When the very big problems you face are fixed you become aware that those big problems hid from your view a thousand smaller problems”. Despite this Ninja continues to work hard to find himself not letting his pride in himself get away as it is something he values dearly, “ At time in my life, I have had nothing to my name but my pride.

It is the last thing I would ever give up on”. In an effort to find purpose Ninja returns to rug making and although he finds he is treated badly and paid unfairly at first, he soon begins feel happy and content with his life. This once again is an example of Nana’s resilience and shows us that the experiences in Australia involving who he is have developed Nana’s resilience as a person and now show that despite being the victim of unfair treatment he has the resilience to bounce back and try again.

The second problem faced by Ninja in Australia and one that shows a weakness in his identity is his friendless status. Unlike in Afghanistan where Ninja had a number of friends and family members to fall back on, in Australia he has no one. With no support, Ninja struggles to learn the new

laws of land which make it hard for him to settle in quickly. Ninja says how he is used to people knowing me” and how he finds it “ hard to get used to people not knowing me”. This shows to the reader a flaw in Nana’s identity where he does not like the idea of having no one around him and possibly hinders his settling in.

Luckily Ninja makes some good friends and with the help of them the reader sees Ninja flourish in Australia. The final challenge that shapes who Ninja is in Australia is the cultural differences between Afghanistan and Australia. Like with all cultures there are differences however the difference between Australia and Afghanistan is much larger than Australia and New Zealand. For Ninja he struggles with some terms and rules. For example, when he looks for a home he talks with a lady who says he must be vegetarian to live in the house, for Ninja he is thinking “ what in God’s name is she talking about?

What is a vegetarian? ” This shows that in Afghanistan there is no such thing as a vegetarian, so there is a cultural difference. Another example is smoking. Once again Ninja is looking for a house but the owner does not want smoking in or out of the house. Where the owner finds smoking a bad thing, Ninja sees it as something that can “ make you content for a few minutes. It gathers up all the pieces of your mind and body and knits them together”. This different view on smoking again shows a cultural difference.

For Ninja this is a steep learning curve but one he takes head on. He shows to the reader, once again, how his identity as a Hazard does not stop him from being accepting of others and also develops it at the same time. It also

shows that his identity is one of understanding and learning. I learnt a lot from Ninja in the Australia chapters. I look up to Ninja as someone to model my resilience off because he faced exploitation by others, something I believe is very hard to not get depressed about.

I would compare Ninja to one of my other inspirational role models, Barack Obama, solely on the fact that like Ninja, Obama is a very resilient person who often faces adversity in parliament but always bounces back and continues on, just like Ninja did in Australia. In conclusion, the text, The Arguer of Mazda-e-Shari develops the idea of identity in the main character Ninja Mozart in three different locations. The first in Afghanistan where the reader is shown how war and death that surrounded Ninja shaped his identity as a conflict loather and a peace lover.

It also showed the start of Nana's kindness identity and acceptance of others for who they are not who he would want them to be, unlike the Taliban. In Whomever Detention Centre, Ninja shows how he develops himself to become a resilient person who can bounce back from setbacks. It also showed how Ninja developed his identity as a leader who does not allow prejudice or dislike of people to cloud his vision and impair his actions. Lastly in Australia, Ninja shows his resilience and how strong it really is as Ninja offers from unfair work place treatment.

Along with this, Australia also highlights a weakness in Ninja, that being without friends to fall back on he feels exposed and not as confident. Finally the cultural differences in Australia compared to Afghanistan and how Ninja deals with them reinforces the reader's understanding of how his identity as

an accepting person shines through even in Australia when he is being denied a house because he smokes. These ideas discussed are the ways in which Ninja Mozart showed the most development in his identity throughout the text.