

The desire of an individual essay sample

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According to the French poet and novelist Arsène Houssaye, he said that if one could tell him his lover then he would be able to tell the type of person you are. The quote by Arsène Houssaye sounds like a cliché but the object of desire of an individual tells more about the individual rather than the object of desire. In the research conducted using the book *The Epic of Gilgamesh and Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo the statement will be analyzed to show how the individual's object of desire can tell more about them.

According to the book, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* the king of Uruk, Gilgamesh a combination of both gods and mortals. The king is a zealous builder who builds a wall around the city of Uruk (Nancy pg10) and erects the temple towers known as ziggurats. The king suffers from immoderation. Unable to moderate in his activities this makes him a fiercest warrior and the most ambitious of builders.

Gilgamesh has no compassion for the people of the kingdom of Uruk. The desire to kill the sons of the people of Uruk and the raping of their daughters clearly show the lack of compassion in the individual. His lack of compassion for the people of Uruk is so great it forces the gods to create Enkidu his equal half man and half god “ let them contend together and leave Uruk in quite” (Nancy pg 62)

According to the book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo *Anowa* shows compassion for her husband Kofi Ako. When her parents do not agree with the choice of a spouse *Anowa* gets frustrated and leaves with her husband Kofi Ako. Fear of death is exhibited in both books as we see Gilgamesh on the death of Enkidu Gilgamesh is horrified and weeps deeply as he thinks about the prospects of

his death in the near future. Gilgamesh leads out to the end of the world in search of the answers about eternal life. When he learns about his mortality the king of Uruk heads back to the land of Uruk where he becomes a better king after coming to peace with his pending death.

In the book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo we see Anowa afraid of her death and talks about it frequently as she says she does not see herself in the future. The women tell her it is due to lack of children since women with children can see themselves in the future. This causes Anowa to ask her husband Kofi to marry a second wife so that he can sire a child with her. This shows that everyone is afraid of something. Despite Gilgamesh being a great warrior who has fought many battles still the thought of death scares him to a point of going to search for the answers of eternal life. Anowa is scared of death to a point where despite eloping with her husband she is willing to have him marry a second wife. This shows despite being rich and having slaves she fears her own death (Aidoo pg 55).

Slavery or servant ship is rampant in both texts and shows that individuals love to be in power. Gilgamesh builds a wall and temple towers in the city of Uruk. He does so by the use of forced labor and the help of slaves. When Enkidu first come he served more as a servant to Gilgamesh rather than an equal. Anowa being born and bred as an African woman she was accustomed to hard labor and endless chores. But with her rise in wealth and social status she decides to buy slaves to do her work. This shows that the Anowa loves to be in power hence the desire for slaves (Aidoo pg 40).

Enkidu is a hard worker and a lucky man. He was fashioned entirely from clay just like the other human beings. Enkidu was raised by animals hence he was crude. From a humble man he works his way up to the top of the social ladder. The help of the favor from the gods to make him an equal of Gilgamesh shows the aspect of lack in him. In the book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo we see that Anowa and Kofi are both hard workers. With their desire of a better life and children the two are seen to do whatever it takes to succeed in life and to attain their set goals (Aidoo pg67). This is seen as the start of the book *Anowa* searches for her own husband. They begin the life together as they struggle and eventually become wealthy and own slaves.

In both texts the people believe in a supernatural being. This shows the people have faith in them. According to the book *The Epic of Gilgamesh* we see the people of Uruk believing in gods which are supernatural beings. Gilgamesh who is more of a god than he is a man shows the people have faith. With the desire to be god like or the respect for gods shows the faith in the people. In the book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo when Anowa lacks a child, she blames it on supernatural factors (Aidoo pg 60). She points out that her problem has being caused by forces not of this earth and that the only way she can be able to get a child is by through a supernatural phenomenon

The books depict people as traitors of there people. The book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo Kofi is a traitor of his people as he engages in slave trade with the white people. He sells his kind to the white, as he is a traitor and a materialistic person who does not value his people. In the book, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* the king of Uruk is a traitor to his people. With the desire to have

whatever he wants the Gilgamesh ends up raping the daughters of the people of Uruk at their wedding eves and raping the wives of fellow soldiers (Nancy pg45). Gilgamesh ends up using forced labor on the people of Uruk to have the temple towers and the wall build around the city of Uruk. The war that occur from time to time due to the kings violent nature end up killing the fathers of children of Uruk. This shows that the desire to have what one wants leads them to be traitors to their people. The materialism of Kofi and the immoderation of Gilgamesh turn them to traitors.

Both books show the characters ability to love. Gilgamesh in the book *The Epic of Gilgamesh* cries when Enkidu dies (Nancy pg 50). This is a sign of love as he grieves his loss of a friend and partner. In the book *Anowa* by Ama Ata Aidoo we see Anowa portray love for her husband and even is willing to leave her family just to be with him. The desire to be with someone in the both books show the ability to love by both individuals

From the analysis above we are able to see that a man can be defined by the object of his desire more than he can give about the object. The desire of objects and people in the two books give out the individuals characteristics.

References

Aidoo, Ama Ata. *Anowa*. Vol. 19. Longman Publishing Group, 1980.

Sandars, Nancy, ed. *The epic of Gilgamesh*. Penguin UK, 1972.