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ASSIGNMENT: SHOULD HUMANITY AVENGE DIVINITY?

DISCUSS USING CHINUA ACHEBE'S DEAD MEN'S PATH

CLASH OF DIVINITY BY RUBEN ONYISHI.

In my view, I would say that humanity should not avenge for divinity that humanity should allow the super natural powers to fight their fight and not intervene. This has to do with spiritual aspect of life. What we don't know as humans is above us; we are just mere mortals. I so much believe that there are gods which need to be appeased and i still believ in the existence of the supreme God who whatches over the universe.

Come to think about it, if the supreme God is not in support of the lesser gods do you think that there powers will be effective? Look at the herbs we take whenever we are sick; what makes them to be effective in us? Even till tomorrow Africans take herbal medicine because they know the power to heal is inside of it. From the beginning of time and before the coming of christianity and even education, many gods have been worshipped and are still being worshipped starting from the Greece period up till now: asian continent like China, India and Japan still worship their gods and they so much respect them. India for example still worship cow and snake till tomorrow, they never wanted to be blind folded by modernism, at least we have the best doctors in the world from India, we have christians and muslims and they all believe in the existence of these lesser gods. I see no reason why Africa as a whole will cease to believe in the potency of the powers of the lesser gods all in the name of enlightenment and education brought to us by the whiteman.

Look at the fate Michael Obi suffered in the short story “The Dead Men’s Path” by Chinua Achebe while trying to ignore the warnings and the advises of his colleague in the teaching profession and that of the chief priest. He ruined his career while trying to bring changes in Ndume Central School. He was made a headmaster in an early age. We were told in the story that Ndume Cenral School has been an unprogressive school and the school’s issue has been like that for a long period of time before the missionary authorities sent Michael Obi to be the Headmaster. As a new headmaster, he has his goals to achieve, aims and vision which he hoped to realise together with his wife. They had hoped to make good job of it. They have agreed to make beatiful gardens and everything will just be modern and delightful. Since the teachers are single, Obi had believed that they will give all their time and energy to the school. It is Obi’s dream to improve the standard of the school both academically and environmental wise which led to the wife saying “we shall have such beatiful gardens and everything will be just modern and delightful...”

Where Michael Obi’s problem started was when he blocked a path way which is less passed by people but it happened to be the path the spirits and the ancestors cannot do without. “One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalised to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flower-bed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school

compound to the bush on the other side”. This amazed Obi who now told one of his teachers who have spent three years teaching in this school. He shook his head as he learned that the school authority allow the villagers to make use of this path. “The path,” said the teacher apologetically, “appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial.” This teacher went ahead and told him that there was a big row sometime ago when they attempted to close it. As someone who claims to be educated, was he not suppose to consult the elders of the land before doing anything on his own? The elders would have directed him on what to do but he did not. He went bothering himself on what the Government Education Officer would say or think about the school when he comes to inspect the school. So he took it upon himself to go block the path way.

He failed to understand that he happens to not be the first headmaster of the school. Many headmasters have come and gone before he was appointed and these predecessors of his saw this path way all these while, he would have asked himself what is in this pathway that made his predecessors not to have blocked it all these while. The village priest of Ani called him three days later after he had blocked the pathway and told Obi, the headmaster. “I have heard that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed...” He was there trying to rationalise and argue with the priest that “we cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound.”

“Look here, my son,” said the priest bringing down his walking stick, “this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born...” At this juncture, the headmaster ought to have known that it is not an issue which he can handle. He should have made a consultation from the elders of the land on what to do. He made the decision unwisely. The forces he was fighting were beyond him but he didn’t realise it. He would have unblocked the pathway before he think of what to do next instead he replied the priest of Ani that “the whole purpose of our school is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas.” What a foolish response from Michael Obi, the headmaster.

Well, the priest of Ani told him that they follow the practices of their fathers that they would be friends when he unblocks the pathway but he refused. This now led to his ruin as a headmaster, a part of the school building collapsed and other things that happend to him which were bad fortune. Had he listened to the priest of Ani, he would not have experienced this misfortune that he encountered.

In the clash of divinity as well, we will find clash of religion. The clash of religion took place at the junction where the elders were awaiting the youths

have escorted the masquerade which has prepared to go into the spirit world, according to the people of Imobi tradition.

The Assemblies of God church fixed a programme on this same day. And it happened that this day, women are not meant to come out for it is forbidden for women to see the naked of the masquerade and the men only are meant to know the secrets of the masquerade.

On this day, it happened that the Assemblies of God members were passing through the way that led to the place where the men of Imobi were standing. These men were surprised to see these Assemblies of God worshippers. They made attempt to scare them away but the christian men of Assemblies of God worshippers warned them seriously that if they try do anything stupid they will be dealt with. One of the Imobi men advised that they should allow them to go believing that the gods will deal with them.

But was as if God Almighty was with the Assemblies of church christians on this particular day. The young men of Imobi were not with the elders of Imobi at the time the christians were passing, if not they would have dealt with the Assemblies of God worshippers. It happened that the youths came to hear about what happened and followed the worshippers of Assemblies of God tagging the pastor himself. A young man named Seventy-seventy was the head of this mop. They beat pastor Dinma and wife and even raped the wife. This mop decided to burn the pastor and his wife but a member of the mop rescued them.

Twenty years later, things were not going well with the people of Imobi. It happened that a lady'