

## SHOULD HUMANITY AVENGE DIVINITY? USING DEATH MEN`S PATH BY CHINUA ACHEBE AND CLASH OF DIVINITY BY REUBEN ONYISHI

The short story is about a cultural clash between a small African village and a new headmaster of Ndume central school, Michael Obi. Michael Obi and his wife Nancy, are considered as modern and progressive people. He is considered to be 'a young and energetic man' (page 109) by the mission authorities, and that is why they sent 'him to Ndume central school.

He absolutely rejects the narrow view of older ones and the often less educated ones and instead of using conservative method to follow them he prefers modern method. Due to Michael`s European Christian way of life, he decides to cross the footpath that dead people use to pass to the burial ground. He uses "heavy stick strengthened with barbed wire" to close the path. Because of that the village priest of Ani goes to see Michael and asks him to remove the fence. During Ani emphasis the traditional importance of the dead men`s path. He says that he is sure "the whole life of villagers depends on it". He tries to explain the of the footpath but he doesn't take him seriously. He traces the priest condescendingly by listening to his argument with a "satisfied smile on his face" and instead of respecting and the traditional belief of the Ani people, Michael tells him that the purpose of this school is to teach the children to laugh at such idea.

"What you say may be true" replied the priest, "but we follow the practice of fathers. If you re-open the path, we shall have nothing to quarrel about". What I will say is this: "let hawk perch and let the eagle perch".

Unfortunately for the school master, a woman dies in childbirth. According to the belief of the villagers, the child could be unable to go the burial ground because the path was blocked by the school barrier. Michael Obi wakes up next morning and discovers that everything has been shattered including the school building. Because of his arrogance and stubbornness, he finally leads himself to his own destruction. The education inspector writes a nasty report about the school.

From the short story what occurs is that humanity cannot avenge divinity. Ani priest knows fully well that humanity should not and cannot avenge divinity. For him, as the priest his duty is just to tell Michael the of him closing the Dead Men`s Path. Instead of Michael to welcome wholeheartedly, he listened with a satisfied smile on his face claiming that such idea is superstitious and barbaric. Ani did not go arguing with Michael because he knows fully well that an insect' that is killed by a locomotive train must be deaf. What Igbos known as 'Ukpana Okpoko Gburu na nti chiri ya'. The priest left and live Michael and his ancestors to do the fight.

Divinity in this case avenged for itself by pulling down school building and shattered all the flowers and barbed wires they used in closing the dead men`s path. Michael Obi finally knows that whether he believes or not, there is a supernatural power that can control things.

In the case of Clash of Divinity, there is a case of clash which ensued between the people of Imobi community and the Assemblies of Divine. First, humanity cannot avenge divinity. This is seen in page sixteen of the novel how Eliza, the wife of Asogwa Ugwu dies and buries in the hinterland because of adulterous act. Eliza dies because she sleeps with her husband`s brother, Cosmas, claiming that her husband, Asogwa Ugwu, is a dirty man. Asogwa Ugwu do not even know what happened at the initial time until he sees "a one-legged vulture limping into his compound". His summoned his Kinsmen, and his kinsmen consults a diviner who reveals of the land goddess concerning Eliza`s immediate illness. In this case, Asogwa Ugwu could not anything but allow the land

goddess which is known for its divine power to judge the matter. Because adultery is against the law of the land, therefore, Eliza pays her life for defying the land.

Nevertheless, “is it that Omaba cannot avenge for himself or what? Why do you men of Izanagi want to bring a curse upon yourself and your generations? If the man had offended Omaba, does it mean that Omaba can no longer fight for himself?” That is the issue.

Ogbuano Oyeugwu, alias Seventeen-Seventeen and his cohorts has attempted to avenge for divinity by tying up pastor Dinma and his wife, pull them inside the church and set it ablaze. If not for Michael, he rescued them from the backdoor, they could have been roasted there like firewood. Seventeen-Seventeen does this thing with passion, claiming to be cultural conscious in preserving Imobi custom, which says that it is abomination for women to see Omaba naked. He finally lost everything in the name of protecting his so-called custom. He should have allowed divinity to fight for itself as advised by Onyishi Eluama. He later dies unrepentant as he killed in the market place for taking a woman`s breast.

### Conclusion

In the above topic of the works, we can see how religion is clashing. How the people in the side of traditional religion is fighting over the issue that is there before them. They are engaging themselves in the crisis which they could have prevented by allowing divinity to fight for itself. Both religions fail to understand that creating enmity between themselves cannot a problem but they could rather interlock and sieve out good from chaff.

#### Works Cited:

Achebe, Chinua. *Girls at War and other stories*. London: Heinemann,1971.

Onyishi, Reuben. *Clash of Divinity*. Enugu: Sunny-CJ Company, 2016.

Agwoh C.R.C. *The Confused gods*. Enugu: Black Belt Konzult Ltd, 2013.

### Summary

The issue of religion shouldn't be something that people should take personality be it Christianity or Traditional religion. One should take caution in deciding issues concern God. In the case of Michael Obi and his wife Nancy. They suddenly want to put a stop on something that they do not know how it came about. Michael Obi and his Eurocentric attitude towards religion finally led to his own destruction. He did not decipher from what Ani priest means by saying that one should “let the hawk perch and let eagle perch”. Instead of him to take the advice giving to him by Ani priest he rather looked the priest with ‘a satisfied smile on his face’.

In the case of Ogbunu Oyeugwu alias Seventeen-Seventeen, he is beclouded by his attitude concerning the traditional religion. He was ready to take the bull by the horn in provided he preserves his so-called Omaba custom. He finally dies unrepentant because he fails to understand that humanity cannot avenge divinity. He should have allowed divinity to avenge itself.

