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Writing 39B

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Critical Reading #2 Assignment

Through internet research I have learned what “Aida-Wedo” is in the short story Ozioma the Wicked. In Vodou tradition, Aida-Wedo is a goddess of water, snakes, and rainbows. Aida-Wedo is also referred to as the “Rainbow Serpent”. Aida-Wedo symbolizes continuity and strength, as well as integration and wholeness. In Voudou customs, Aida-Wedo’s message consists of healing and strength for the entire world.

This information helps clarify the short story “Ozioma the Wicked” by Nnedi Okorafor since its provided context to the culture of the book. In the short story, a young girl named Ozioma is shunned by her fellow tribesmen for the fact that she can communicate with snakes. During one day, a huge snake comes down from the sky and kills a man, and everyone turns to her to get rid of this snake. Near the end of the short story, Aida-Wedo comes down from the sky and appraises Ozioma’s determination against the snake. After her appraisal, Ozioma was thanked by her fellow tribesmen as they prosper for 75 years from the incident. Now what makes the information in the first paragraph relevant is how it ties in to the story when Aida-Wedo first appeared. Within the short story, when Aida-Wedo appeared it was after a rainstorm and as she descended from the sky a rainbow arch was being formed. (Pgs. 72-73). She also refers to the giant snake Ozioma faces as “her people” (Pgs. 73). Knowing that she is a goddess of water, snakes, and rainbows it brings a clearer understanding of who she in within the story. Also since Aida-Wedo represents certain traits like integration and wholeness it also helps portray the message of the short story which is unity.