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The Role of the Ocean in “Silence”

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The Role of the Ocean in "Silence"

The ocean is a constant reminder of the natural world. When he watches multiple martyrdoms taking place, Rodrigues finds it particularly problematic because the ocean seems to be as clean as before. Because Rodrigues is generally in coastal Japan, the ocean is always there, and its peaceful resemblance day after day evolves from a reassuring picture to one of anguish, as the waves pound on after martyrs have died for a silent God. Rodrigues' views are likewise influenced by water: he regularly explains things using water images.

The sea often represents Rodrigues' vision of God, notably in its quiet, the unchanging emotions, and destructive power. Whenever He failed to communicate to Rodrigues in the middle of his anguish or intercede to safeguard the agonizing Christian martyrs in Tomogi, Rodrigues observes, that God remained mute like the sea. Even though Rodrigues thinks God sent them to Japan, by carrying them over the ocean, he remains perplexed and upset by His seeming indifference for their plight, just like the ocean seems untouched as well as uninterested. When Ichizo and Mokichi were tormented and their bodies swallowed up by the ocean, the inference was that God held some amount of guilt for their anguish by refusing to intervene or put a stop to it. Similarly, when Garrpe drowned while attempting to save the drowning believers who were slain for his cause, he passes on because of his love to a Greater Being who did not seem to come to his aid salvage his people. The ocean, in this manner, depicts Rodrigues' conception of God as all authoritative, needlessly vicious, and ultimately disinterested concerning humans.

In addition, the ocean, eternal and all-consuming, emerges and returns throughout Silence's chapters. Rodrigues sails by ship to Macau and Japan, and the first significant threat to his goal is a terrible storm at sea. In the following chapters, he spends numerous difficult days

and nights onboard boats, and he always appears to see the sea as strange, menacing, and unforgiving. He observes the martyrdom of Believers in the ocean twice: first by exposure in Chapter 4's "water punishment," and once by drowning in Chapter 7.

The ocean becomes a metaphor for God because it is a vast expanse that seems utterly unconcerned about what happens on its surface. It seems to reflect God's Silence in the face of human misery. The sea continues to roll on, no matter how many people it drowns or brutally tortures with its tides; the water washed the corpses, gobbled them up, and extended out with unchangeable faces after their death, Rodrigues recounts in Chapter 4. He then laments that God was quite like the sea. Even after his imprisonment, Rodrigues spends a lot of time around the coast of Japan, first in the tiny southwestern islands, then in Nagasaki, and last in Edo (Tokyo). As a result, he gets repeated opportunities to revisit the dismal reflections that the sea causes in him. Rodrigues revisits the appearance of the water in Chapter 7 when Garrpe drowns while struggling to save the group of Christian believers. Here he laments the sea where the victims had fallen, plummeted straight miserably. Unfortunately, the water extended on indefinitely and God remained deafeningly silent.

There are several interpretations of the ocean, and the majority of them create a sad and hazardous environment. The God and the water remained mute silent. The description appeared much too often throughout the text. There is a parallel between the enormous expanse of the ocean and Sebastio Rodrigues' anxiety in his heart. The water swallows up so many corpses of Catholic believers symbolizing that the ocean served as a dumping place for martyrs. Nonetheless, the ocean has been compared to God to elaborate on God's power; thus, people were restless whenever the sea was calm and quiet.

References

Endo, S. (1966). *Silence*. Taplinger Publishing Company (USA).

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