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TESP 164  
Reflection-Malloch and Isiramen

When reading the Isiramen essay I couldn't help but feel sad for the Nigerians. Their traditional way of life was so pure and good before they were influenced by the outside world. Traditional Nigerians valued community, unity, and family above all else. I loved their belief in the extended family which brought their society closer and even worshiped the "invisible members of the community" which were spiritual beings and ancestors. The spiritual leaders of traditional Nigerian society would make moral pronouncements and invoke divine sanctions on members of the community that did not follow the altruistic norms and taboo set forth by the community. This society, ran by religion, clearly had extreme spiritual capital as discussed in the Malloch essay. The awareness of their religious morals in business seems to have all but vanished if you look at the modern Nigerian society. In fact, their values seemed to have flipped; "Community sharing has been taken over by monolithic business interests and the idea of co-responsibility and cooperation has undergone considerable strain." It would seem as though religion, and the community values that came with it, was the only thing holding Nigeria together and that once it was removed by foreign interaction and ideologies Nigeria collapsed into a sort of chaos.

America on the other hand has had its sense of community and society established not only through the spiritual (church) but also through the state. By having a legal and justice system we have been able to establish a set of "universal" morals that businesses and people should practice. Unlike Nigeria, business in America lacks spiritual capital because it thrives on social and human capital. I find the concept of human capital very objectifying and think that it contributes to the class separation that has transpired in the US. The business culture sees us all as a pawn in its game and in order to be assigned any value we must show our worth or human capital. This could pose a problem because being extremely talented or educated doesn't make you a good person. Hitler is revered as an amazing leader and probably showed immense human capital, yet he is used time and time again to represent pure evil. I am not saying that being educated and well-versed is wrong, but if a company hires some scientists because of their high human capital, but fails to evaluate them further than they are putting their company at risk.

In order for a company to be beneficial to society, they must ensure that spiritual and human capital are working together. We have studied corrupt executives and what they have done to their companies, and we do not doubt that they are educated human beings. We doubt that they have any morals and question why they chose to bring down their own communities. I think one of the answers is that spiritual capital is lost in western society. Before the legal system, society created its laws and social norms from religion. I think that to completely remove spirituality or even the morals from business is a recipe for disaster, like what Nigeria has become. Not once in an interview have I been asked a moral dilemma or anything to measure my spiritual capital, only about my professional skills.