Vengeance as Corollary of Social Injustice: A Thematic and Character Analysis of Selected Yorùbá Novels

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Abstract: Vengeance has constantly manifested across human social existence and continues to find depiction in many creative productions, Yorùbá novels inclusive. Because of its nature of recycling conflict and violence causing issues, vengeance has contributed immensely to generating social malady. Earlier researchers have focused more on the issues of crime, violence and conflict management aspects of the Yorùbá novels thereby paying lesser attention to issues of vengeance which is the gap this work tends to fill. This work therefore uses Hippolyte Taine’s mirror image approach of sociology of literature. This study applied the qualitative research approach and the interpretive design to examine the cause and implications of vengeance in the three purposively selected Yorùbá novels due to their thematic concern with vengeance which is intended to helping in stemming the tide of vengeance in the society. The novels are: Ojuàde’s Taa L’Odaran, Adebo’s Qòdò Ìwòyí, and Owolabi’s Èjòó Taa ni?. This study establishes that injustice is the major cause of vengeance as portrayed by the novelists of the selected novels which is acting as the direct reflection of the human society. Implication of vengeance in this paper includes loss of lives, insecurity and poor health.

Keywords: Yorùbá novels; vengeance; human society; injustice

I. Introduction

The ubiquitous nature and human obsession with vengeance have greatly affected human existence Faborode (2022). Vengeance is often confused as the suitable way of solving problems and is also seen as means of satisfying one’s emotional state because it seem to disguise as the only reliable way of seeking justice which ended up raising justifiable concern in human society. Vengeance has been an old theme in Yorùbá literature; it surfaces in their proverbs.

“Bí ađiye bá dàmí ło̱gùn nà, màà fọ̀ lèyìn”
“If the fowl pours away my medication, I will break its eggs”

It is also portrayed in the Yorùbá history which was re-enacted in the Mainframe film, Afọnjá, when Alàafín Àòóle was warned against vengeance, but he refused, stating the fact that he was wrongfully treated and humiliated as a young prince and was also sold into slavery which he saw as injustice. He then felt the need to save his own face and image from the shame and injustice from his past. The need to avenge, therefore led him straight to his doom.

Human societies have always been visited with conflicts and violence of different degrees that degenerated into loss of lives and total annihilation of a particular people leaving them with the search for justice against and for one another, thereby embracing various means of instilling pain on one’s opposition or oppressor. This hurtful vengeance seeking nature of human beings is buttressed by Beauvoir (2004:248):
French society embraced ‘rage and hate’ when their country was occupied by German forces during the Second World War “one does not hate hailstorm or a plague, one hate only man, not because they are causes of material damage, but because they are conscious orchestrator of genuine evil. When the French heard about the degree of evil perpetrated against their fellow compatriots they sworn to take revenge on the Germans with the assurance that the Germans will pay.

This expression simply means that there is an immanent instantaneous response and expression of human desire to exact revenge and a more hazardous evil on their aggressor which would be equal if not more than the horror or brutality they have earlier experienced. At a particular point, human beings see vengeance as the only way out of oppression and every unpleasant occurrences orchestrated by fellow men.

As criminal and violent activities are continuously perpetrated in the society, vengeance continues the trend by turning an oppressed individual who avenges into an aggressor; the chain never ends because of humans’ unending thirst for vengeance as no one is ready or patient enough to wait for a judicial sitting that would preside on the type of punishment that befits an offender, in that, when there is a great pain, there is an immediate thirst and need to avenge, to justify and to expunge the horror of dehumanisation from one’s memory and restore a balance or peace where evil-thoughts and intentions once dominated.

However, it should be noted that vengeful acts by no means can restore peace or harmony because they have emotional backing and lack of judicial power which would dictate the suitable punishment for the crime committed. This study therefore recognises the inevitable nature of vengeance by viewing injustice as the major cause of vengeance in the society as mirrored by the selected Yoruba novels.

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Existing Works on Yorùbá Novels and Vengeance

There have been several scholarly works on Yorùbá novels. These works span through the rise and development of the Yoruba novels to several criticisms on the creativity of the Yoruba novel. Bamgbọ̀sè’s (1974) work, the first major attempt, focuses on Fágúnwà. He discusses all the aspects of Fágúnwà’s works. His work sheds light on some of the remote background sources of Fágúnwà’s inspirations, narrative techniques of the novelist, his thematic preoccupations, characterisations and creative use of language. The study establishes that although there are several encounters with weird characters and incidents in Fágúnwà’s novels; however, they do not prevent the readers from seeing the deeper level of realism in Fágúnwà’s novels.

Iṣọlā (1978) opines that for an artist to be called a good artist, such an artist must exhaust his artistic resources of presentation to ensure effective delivery. He identifies two different types of detective Yoruba novels- the tender and the tough. His observation and narrative presentation, characterisation and language use in detective novels makes him conclude that Okedíjí’s novels are more relevant to the society than those of Akinlade. He asserts that no novel can be great if the novelist is careless about his art. He then concludes by examining the techniques used by writers in modern Yorùbá novels.
Adébáyówále (1994) in her doctoral thesis investigates style in Yorùbá crime fiction. She demonstrates in her study that style is not ornamental or something separate from or subordinate to the action, presentation and ideas expressed in the novels. She also emphasises that the way the writers of Yorùbá crime fiction present every aspect of their stories and the artistry with which the stories are told renew reader’s interest in wanting to read the stories all over again. In Adébáyówále’s analyses of the works of Ořédiṣii and Akínlèjé, she examines the narrative presentational style, characterisational style and their use of language she then submits that the works of the two novelists serve the same purpose despite their differences.

2.2 Conceptualising Vengeance

There is no smoke without fire; vengeance does not just spring forth from oblivion. These scholars agree that vengeance is the unlawful payment of evil or painful debt; that is, it happens when someone personally returns the suffering or evil he/she has passed through to those who made such person pass through it. Elster (1990) defines revenge as the attempt at some cost or risk to oneself to impose suffering upon those who have made one suffer because they have made one suffer.

Stuckless and Goranson (1994:803) define revenge as the infliction of harm in righteous response to perceived harm or injustice. Uniacke (2000) claims that revenge is personal and non-instrumental: with revenge, we seek to make people suffer because they have made us suffer, not because their actions or values require us to bring them down. He also sees revenge as payback for an injury qua injury. Govier (2002) believes that when people seek revenge, we seek satisfaction by attempting to harm the other (or associated persons) as a retaliatory measure. Vengeance is the act of doing something to hurt someone because that person did something that hurt you or someone else.

It could be deduced from the definitions of the scholars above that vengeance has to do with the payment of evil with evil. Vengeance is bound to happen when those that have been hurt by a person or group of people decide to play the role of a judge over their own personal issues without involving the appropriate institution that is meant to provide justice. For the purpose of this research, vengeance is the deliberate exchange or payment of harm with harm which aims at satisfying one’s emotional state. Vengeance is deemed personal because it is always carried out by a hurtful person without a legal/judicial backing. The aim of vengeance from the above definition is the trade of harm with harm.

2.3 Mirror Image approach of Sociology of Literature

Sociology of literature is a theoretical approach, which is conceived with the relationship between a literary work and the social structure in which it is created. It reveals that the existence of a literary creation is determined by the social situations around the literary artiste, because no work of art stands out of the attitudes, morals and values of its society, since no literary artiste has been brought up unexposed to his society and the immediate world around him/her. From the foregoing, therefore, we could infer that no literary work can stand without the influence of the society that produces it. (Olofinsao et al, 2021) There is a great relationship between literature and the society; this is because literature uses language as its medium of social creation. This paper is anchored on the ‘mirror image approach of sociology of literature’. The approach is suitable for this study as it portrays literature as the direct reflection of the various facets of social structure that reflect human society and culture which make it regarded as the mirror of the society. The early proponent of this approach, such as Madame de stale (1766-1817), H.A. Taine (1828-1893), Louis de Bonald (1754-1840) argue that through the careful reading of any nation’s literature, one can tell the identity of that nation. This implies
that when a literary creation of a nation or a society such as Yorùbá literature is carefully studied the way of life of such people would be known. Ôgunṣiná (2006:10) expresses his view on the mirror approach thus:

Thus, from the point of view of the mirror image approach, a literary piece is a veritable mine of information characters are representations of distinct social situations. Events and situations in a work of art are not just figments of the writer’s imagination; they have direct relationship to specific historical periods in a society. The themes of a literary work have to be interpreted in relation to definite social facts of the society where the artifact takes its root. The narration technique and stylistic devices employed by an artist is not an end in themselves, they all have social implications. It is therefore the duty of the literary sociologist to transform the private world of literature to specific social meanings.

The Yorùbá novel, just like sociology, deals with all the social, political and economic lives of the Yoruba society. It penetrates into the deepest part of social life and expresses the experiences, emotion and attitude of Yoruba people and society because of its long relationship to the historical development of the society. This theory is necessary because it helps to relate the work of art to its society that serves as the mirror which shows the reason human choose to use vengeance to destroy the peaceful existence of the characters in the novels and in the real life human society at large. Sociology of literature has independent values and deep faithfulness to reality. The theory will help in revealing the occurrences and manifestation of vengeance in the Yoruba society as portrayed in the selected Yoruba novels because of its influence on the novelists who are members of the Yoruba society.

III. Discussion

3.1 A Synoptic Discussion of Selected Yorùbá Novels

a. Taa L’Ôdan

Banji is a young man working in Ondo town, his wife Toọrọra gave birth to Yele and Kunle. In Ondo, he met Titiólọ during his friend’s Fołąjinmi’s, birthday party. Because of his lust for Titiólọ, he lied to his parents about his wife Toọrọra and sent her away. Toọrọra took one of the twins, Kunle, and left Yele with Banji’s aged parents. Banji began a relationship with Titiólọ.

Akinkúnmi, Fołąjinmi’s friend, introduced Banji and his friends to cocaine business, due to the huge profit in it, Banji decided to carry drugs to the United States. On getting to America, he was paid a sum of three million naira (#300,000), got a gift of a car and lots of other gifts. He came back to Nigeria and lied to his friends, Fołąjinmi and Akinkúnmi, that the buyer paid him sixty thousand naira. His friends were upset about this, but they had no means of finding out the truth.

Banji became suddenly rich and got married to Titiólọ in a lavished wedding party that was graced by the high and mighty, while Fołąjinmi, on the other hand, had a little party for his wedding, he was even unable to entertain his few guests. Banji’s new acquired wealth made his friends jealous and unsettled. Fołąjinmi lost his job and was left with nothing to take care
of his family. This made Akinkúnmi introduce him to a robbery gang that provided his daily needs.

Fọlajímí decided to take revenge on Bànji for cheating them. This made him recruited his (Bànji's) wife, Títílọ̀lọ̀, to help them get rid of her husband. She agreed and Bànji was brutally killed. Fọlajímí killed everyone that could stand against Títílọ̀lọ̀, but Yèlè whom they had killed earlier went to possess his twin brother, Kùnlè. The secret was revealed by Yèlè's spirit who later helped Kùnlè to kill Títílọ̀lọ̀, Fọlajímí and Akinkunmi for the evils they had done to his father and his entire family members.

b. Òdó Ìwòyì
The story centers on Qbafémi, the son of Mr and Mrs Mákinté. He is a very brilliant and upright young boy. He scored the highest mark in the University Matriculation entrance examination and got admitted into the University on scholarship. One day, in a restaurant, he met T.J. (Tùnji Bákáre), the son of the very popular Honourable Bákáre. T. J. became a very close friend of Qbafémi (F. M). Qbafémi fell in love with Omọwùnmi, and the love affair was constantly frustrated and threatened by Páska, a member of Fàrì Oro fraternity.

T.J. calmed him down and persuaded him to join Mo Mura cult fraternity. Unknowing to him that T. J. and Omọwùnmi belong to the same cult group, he was initiated, and he killed Páska his aggressor and few other members of Fàrì Oro cult group. Qbafémi later became the head of Mo Mura fraternity. T.J. called on Qbafémi and the cult members to help him collect the money his father brought home. Qbafémi and his minions went there, but the robbery was more serious than they planned. They shot T. J.'s father when he was proven too stubborn. It was the security men on the street that captured them and almost killed T. J. when they realised he was the one that orchestrated the robbery.

Qbafémi and Omọwùnmi were handed over to the police. The horrendous news killed his mother, and his father was arrested but later set free. He was later released due to the corrupt nature of the police force. The D.P.O lied to everyone that Qbafémi and his cohort had been killed; meanwhile he helped to hide the dangerous couple in Atapa, because he was also a cult member. Tọlání, one of Fàrì Oro fraternity members, saw the couple and informed others. On one fateful day, Fàrì Oro cult members launched a surprise attack on Qbafémi and Omọwùnmi, and killed them. There was a counter-attack by the police, but the fraternity members killed the D.P.O and few unfortunate police officers. Tọlání was the only one captured alive; she was sentenced to life imprisonment.

c. Ọjọ́ Taa Nì?
Làniyì, the only child of his parents, was a childhood friend and lover of Sùmùbọ̀. Their parents were close friends. This closeness led to love affair. Sùmùbọ̀ gained admission into The University of Lagos, but Làniyì could not secure admission. He later got a banking job in Lagos which afforded the two lovebirds to see each other every day until Funmilayo, Sùmùbọ̀'s roommate, introduced her to Dr. Tọlá Ádèdókùn, one of their lecturers. She brainwashed Sùmùbọ̀ into dating the man.

Sùmùbọ̀ did not find it difficult to take the advice because all she cared about at that time was money which made her keep collecting money from Làniyì who was a low-income earner and could no longer meet her needs. Her secret affairs with Dr. Tọlá Ádèdókùn became leaked to everyone, including Làniyì, who became heartbroken. This made him seek
the help of his friends who involved a group of activists in the fight. All efforts to stop the relationship were abortive, and Dr. Tọ́lá decided to marry Sùmbo.

The activists sent various letters to stop their wedding; a group of thugs also tried stopping the wedding, but police intervened. Dr. Tọ́lá Adéokun ordered the arrest of Lániyi and his friends. The time he was arrested made him absent from his office, and he was sacked. After his released, his loss of job made him decide to avenge himself at all costs. He forcefully gained entrance into the couple’s house through their security man, and he tried to kill the couple. On his way out of the compound, he was arrested and arraigned. He was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment, while Dr. Tọ́lá Adéokun and his wife, Sùmbo, were left with physical disability through the gunshots they received from Lániyi. Everything that happened to Lániyi killed his parents.

3.2 Vengeance in the Selected Yorùbá Novels

Vengeance is the act of doing something to hurt someone because that person did something that hurt you or someone else. The reciprocity nature of vengeance shows in Faborode (2022) submission that vengeance is the payment of evil with evil. Vengeance is bound to happen when those that have been hurt by a person or group of people decide to play the role of a judge over their own personal issues without involving the appropriate institution that is meant to provide justice. Vengeance in this study is triggered by injustice as portrayed in the selected Yorùbá novels. Injustice is a situation in which the rights of a person or a group of people are denied and ignored. People seek vengeance when justice is unevenly distributed in the society because of the feeling that they have been cheated and that the system entrusted with justice has failed in their duties; they go rebellious and will decide to seek justice in their own way in order to satisfy their feelings. There are different types of revenge triggered by injustice, such as honour revenge, predatory/prey, fantasy, simple, collective, constructive, transformative, distributive justice and symbolic vengeance or karmic justice. Vengeance caused by injustice as observed in the selected novels are in form of honour revenge, collective revenge and predatory/prey revenge.

3.3 Honour Revenge

This act of revenge occurs when someone has experienced social harm, the loss of face or shame and seeks to revenge in order to restore the perceived loss of honour. This type of revenge is targeted at restoring one’s self-worth and identity when one had earlier suffered a case or cases of injustice. In *Taa L’odaran*, Bànjì who had a business deal with his old friends Akin and Fọ̀là met his untimely death because he refused to share the profits evenly; he had an unfair advantage over his friends. He became very rich and his friends became very poor; they also lost their jobs due to Bànjì’s prideful attitude to their boss. His friends felt cheated and became hurtful and hateful because of inequality and also because Bànjì kept oppressing them; they then decided to brutally murder him. Fọ̀là’s speech at the crime scene shows they ended Bànjì’s life as revenge:

Ọgbẹni Bànjì, a jọ je, a jọ mu, a jọ mulẹ, ìwọ dàlẹ. Bọ̀ ba tayé wa, bi o ba ni ile, O ko ni ọ dàa mó, o tun bùse o ṣe pà Titilọ́lọ́ tì Òdumàré tòrì tì è fún è lòówọ. Tòó, Maa ba tí ọ, ki Titì maa náwọ jọ ni tẹ̀ o. (Taa L’odaran? 2002:107-108)

Mr Bànjì, we ate together; we drank together; we swore to an oath together; you betrayed us. If possible you come back to the world, if you see the act of betrayal, you will never be a part of it; you also wanted to kill Titilọ́lọ́ who was the source of
your wealth from God; anyway, you may be on your way, and
Titi will continue to spend the money.

Fola and Akin killed Banji as revenge with the help of Titi, his wife and they also
requested his wife to share his wealth with them. They then pledged to eliminate any family
member who dares share in the property or pose any threat to Titi’s new inheritance. Banji’s
friends who felt oppressed and cheated resorted to taking his life because they did not get
justice over their clever and trickish friend. This type of vengeance is not alien in the Yoruba
society and the world at large where those who suffered injustice kill those who have cheated
them and successfully boycott justice. This revenge act continues to breed trouble and also
constantly destroy peace in the society. (Osadola & Adeleye, 2020)

3.4 Collective Revenge

This is the act of punishing an entire group for an act of one or all of its members.
The goal of this type of revenge is to make the group that earlier boycotted justice suffer to
same extent the victim earlier suffered. In Odo Iwoyi, the members of Fari Oro cult group are
preparing to avenge the death of Paska whom Mo Muru cult members killed with the order of
Obafemi and Omowummi that Paska threatened before his pitiful death. Tolani expresses the
need to take revenge on the couple who orchestrated the death of one of them in the excerpt
below:

...ki ni Tolani gbọ eyi si, inu re ru soke; Oni awon gbọdọ tete
wa nnkan se si orọ naa nitọ awon Ololufe mejeeji yii ni won
wa leyi iku Paska, okan pataki ninu Omo egbe Fari Oro ti
won pa lojoji. Ko si wa ni dara bi awon ba wa je ki Obafemi ati
Omowummi o wa laye, awon gbedọ ran won lọ si irin-ajo
arema bo ni.
(Odo Iwoyi 2009:58)
...as Tolani heard about this, her anger was kindled; she said
they needed to do something swiftly as regards the issue,
because the two lovers were behind the murder of Paska, one
of the strongest members of Fari Oro cult that was killed long
time ago. It will not be a good one if they allow Obafemi and
Omowummi to be alive; they all have to send them to the
journey of no return.

Fari Oro cult members organised themselves and stormed the supermarket where the love
birds were. Obafemi and Omowummi were shot and butchered into tiny pieces. Fari Oro cult
members succeeded in their revenge plan which was fuelled by their anger because they were
unable to get justice over their departed friends, as Police refused to punish Obafemi and
Omowummi after all they had done; so they decided to take laws into their very own hands as
revealed below:

Awọn ọmọ egbe Fari orọ ko fi akoko sofo rara, won da ibọn
bo awon ololufe mejeeji. Ai paul! Paul! Paul! Lotun-un losi, niwa
ati leyi, sibe ofuutufete ni ibọn yinyin won n ja si; ko ti le tu
irun kan lara Obafemi ati Omowummi; ẹrin ni won n rin kula,
Won gbagbe wi pe eye ti n ke “Mo mura, mo mu je” n bo wa
ko sinu okun-ode lojo kan. Lojiji, awon ọmọ-egbe FĂRĪ ORŎ
He expressed his thoughts as he captured the couples in their volves the act of retaliation for real or perceived harm, usually physically or

vengeance because of the pain of injustice in his heart made him decide to kill Dr Ade

made him swear to take vengeance. His ardent desire to hurt his oppressor

is about cycles and retaliation.

3.5 Predatory/Prey revenge

This involves the act of retaliation for real or perceived harm, usually physically or social. The motive of the avenger is to put an end to the victimisation, real or perceived. This type of revenge is one that is predominantly emotional; it has a certain selfish quality to it. It is by nature personal because the reason for revenge is to get even, to carry out personal hatred and personal justice. Vengeance triggered by injustice, at this point is an act of vindictiveness; it is about cycles and retaliation.

Lániyi who was constantly cheated and oppressed by Dr Adédokún, who snatched his loverbecameembittered. His loss of job due to his illegal arrest add insult to his injury which made him swear to take vengeance. His ardent desire to hurt his oppressor and his quest for vengeance because of the pain of injustice in his heart made him decide to kill Dr Adédokun and Súmbo in Ejó Taa ní? He expressed his thoughts as he captured the couples in their house before he shot at them in the excerpt below:

Adédokun, Súmbo, ilé mọ o yin, o ku ibi ti e mā a gbà, șebi mo ti șo fun un yin pe akóda oró ko to adagbeyin. È wọlè kẹ e woke; opin de si ohun gbogbo lonii (Ejó Taa ní? 2006: 128)

Adedokun, Sumbo, time up! There is no way of escape for you; I told you earlier that the earlier perpetrated crime is not as bad as the vengeance that finally followed. Now, look downwards and upwards; the end has come to everything today.
Lāniyī avenged Sūmībọ’s betrayal and Dr. Adēdōkun’s oppression by making an attempt to terminate the couple’s lives. Though they survived, they will not enjoy the rest of their lives in good health because the incident has left them permanently disabled. Lāniyī was apprehended by the guards who handed him over to the Police after the attack, and he confessed to all of his crimes and was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment with hard labour, without the opportunity for a fine:

Lèyìn opolopo iwâdii awọn olopaâ gbe Lāniyī lọ ilejo, nigbati onitohun si ti le jẹwọ pe looooto loun wuwa ti won fẹsun rè kan oun latari iwa ifowọ ọla gbà ni loju ti Ômọwẹ Adēdōkun hù ti o gbà iyawo oun ti iṣe si tun ọwọ oun lori ṣọro náa. Sẹ belejo ba ti mọjo rè lebi kò ni pe lori ikunle. Adajọ dajo ewon ọdun pẹlu iṣe aṣeṣakara fun Lāniyī lāi ti aye sile fun owo itanran (Ejọọ Taa ni? 2006: 131-132)

After the police conducted series of investigations, Lāniyī was arraigned; he then confessed to all his crimes as charged, and that he did all he had done because of how Dr. Adēdōkun cheated him by coveting his wife and how the issue made him lose his job. Justice was sped up without further delay because of his confession. The judge sentenced Lāniyī to twenty years’ imprisonment without a fine.

If the Police had not showed partiality by choosing Dr. Adēdōkun who is very rich and influential in passing their judgments, Lāniyī would have no reason to carry out revenge because he would have got the justice he deserved. His unjust arrest and that of his friends is a form of injustice which he did everything within his power to avenge. This type of vengeance is common in the Yorùbá and human society in general when lovers suffer injustice due to the betrayal of their partner. Most of the time, such vengeful acts lead to loss of lives, insecurity and poor health as portrayed in the selected novels.

**IV. Conclusion**

The novels we have examined in this paper have revealed that vengeance is present in human relationship as they live with each other in the society. The events in the selected Yorùba novels mirror the issue of vengeance in the human society as those who feel cheated by any member of the society employ every dangerous plans in order to get justice and also satisfy their bruised and damaged emotions. Just as it is in the society, if anyone upsets the natural balance by taking unfair advantage where others did not, such a person deserves to be punished. In case such a person escapes or boycotts justice, those who are affected by such injustice as a natural human being who would not accept to be cheated would opt for the easy, satisfying, yet painful, ways out, which is vengeance, until they get their satisfaction or captured by the law. Mirror image approach has helped realised that what we have in the selected novels are also in reality in Yorùba history which was evidence in the reign of the vengeful, rage-filled and curse inflicting Yorùba monarch Oba Aọlé who reigned in the ancient Oyo Empire. After he suffered a great injustice and betrayal from his chiefs and towns’ people who wanted him to open the calabash (die), he was said to have vengefully placed curses on the Yorùba nation and people. This is buttressed by Johnson (1921:192) as cited below:
His Majesty set his house in order: but before he committed suicide, he stepped out into the palace quadrangle with face stern and resolute, carrying in his hands an earth ware dish and three arrows. He shot one to the North, one to the South, and one to the West uttering those ever-memorable imprecations, “My curse be on ye for your disloyalty and disobedience, so let your children disobey you. If you send them on an errand, let them never return to bring you word again. To all the points I shot my arrows will ye be carried as slaves. My curse will carry you to the sea and beyond he seas, slaves will rule over you, and you their masters will become slaves.

The excerpt above shows the level of vengeance perpetrated by a king who had experienced injustice. The curses he placed on the Yoruba race is assumed to be in operation till today, which is why Yorùbá people are said to hate and fight each other. This example establishes the fact that literature is an experience of reality.

Lastly, one example that mirrors the issue of vengeance which ended up claiming lives of lots of people is seen in the case of Al-Qaeda’s attack on the world Trade Center in September 11, 2001, which killed thousands of people and was intended as revenge against the United States for insulting Islam and for its presence in Saudi Arabia. This attack was avenged within a month by the United States by bombing of Afghanistan, and ten years later (May 1st 2011) by the killing of Al-Qaeda’s founder and leader Osama Bin Laden. This later event was followed eleven days later by a deadly suicide bombing in Pakistan by the Taliban, whose spokesman stated: “We have done this to avenge the Abbottabad incident”, referring to the killing of Osama Bin Laden. (Asadi, 2011; Frijda, 2007; Khan, 2011).

This paper has showed that vengeance results when members of the society are denied justice over events and happenings in the society. Literature portrays reality. Hence, it mirrors the society. The novelists whose novels are examined in this paper have re-enacted how injustice lead to vengeance. This work also established that vengeance has disastrous effects in the society which include loss of lives, insecurity and poor health as portrayed by the novelists of the selected Yorùbá novels.

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