

Violence in Selected Post-Independence Yorùbá Novels

Bólárinwá Abídèmi Olúṣọlá, PhD & Olúwásẹ̀yí-Paul, Adéjóké Rẹ̀mí

Abstract

Violence has been part of the fundamental challenges that have confronted human race and are evident in the Yorùbá novels. Yorùbá novel has played significant roles in mirroring the daily experiences of the Yorùbá people. It has been an archive for proper documentation of Yorùbá cultural ethics and other experiences. Previous studies on the Yorùbá novels have focused more on the historical survey, development, presentational techniques, conflict management, and stylistic device respectively with little attention given to germane issues on violence thereby creating research lacuna. This study therefore identify violence as reflected in the selected post-independence Yorùbá novels in order to critically examine its causes and effects in the works of the novelists under study and their relevance to real life human society. Mirror image approach of Sociology of literature is adopted as framework. Five novels were purposively selected due to their post-independence generation and representations of violence issues in them. The novels are: Òkédijí's Atótó Arére, Adébò's Ọ̀dọ̀ Ịwòyí, Oyèdèmí's Hàà, Ikú Ilé!, Owólabí's Èjọ́ Taa Ni? and Fátíró's Bòbó Àlùtá. Data were then subjected to content and literary analysis. Causes of violence in the novels are corruption, oppression, threats, deceit, betrayal, and politics. While loss of lives, loss of properties, insecurity and health risks are the effects of violence in the novels. It has been established through this study that violence are real and are existing in the Yorùbá society as portrayed by the novelists under study. Violence is not the right option because it disrupts the peace and harmony in the society thereby results into despicable states many times. Yorùbá literary writers are conscious of their society and they mirror the happenings around them in their creative works to correct the anomalies in the society.

Keywords: Yorùbá novels, violence, novelists, society

Introduction

One of the conundrums posed by violence in the human society is their quotidian nature. Violence has form part of human existence. It is part of the fundamental challenges that have confronted human race. The inevitable nature of violence due to differing personal ideas, conflicting goals, unpredictable policies, assumption making, difference in upbringing, non-compliance with rules, misunderstandings, unhealthy competitions and differing expectation in human relation have resulted into social malady.

The human society is polluted with the history of wanton wave of bloody

clashes that have claimed lots of lives and invaluable property which in turn have disastrous outcome on social stability, development, peace, and harmonious human existence that serves as the by-product of violence. There are several measures put in place by the human society to curb violence and all forms of crime related issues that have come to stay in the society. Novelists through their novels express their view about how corruption, oppression, threat, deceit, betrayal and politics lead to violence. This study, therefore works on violence as reflected in the selected post-independence Yorùbá novels in order to critically examine its causes and effects in the works of the novelists under study with a view to determining their portrayal in the novels and their relevance to real life human society.

The Yorùbá novel plays important roles in elevating Yorùbá culture and morals. It provides solution to settle violence and conflict enhancing issues in the society. Yorùbá people are conscious of the fact that whatever they do or do not do will be accounted for. They believe that the wrong deserve to be sanctioned for their wickedness, while the right ought to be rewarded for their good deeds. The Yorùbá society believes in the existence of violence (*ipá*) this surface in their proverbs: *ipá kò tajà, ipá kò ràà* (violence neither buys nor sells one's market). This means that violence is evident in human day to day activities. The Yorùbá novel has acted as an archive for the proper documentation of Yorùbá literature and culture. Many scholars have worked on diverse aspects of the Yorùbá novel. These include Bámgbóṣé (1974) who studied all the aspects of Fágúnwà's novel. Ògúnṣìnà (1976) examined the historical account of the Yorùbá novel till 1974, Ìṣòlá (1978) focused on the techniques used by different writers in modern Yorùbá novels. Olóyedé (1986) worked on the foreign social ways of life in *Ọlábímtán* and *Ládélé* novels. Style in Yorùbá crime fiction is the main concern of Adébòwálé (1994), while the interest of Bòlárínwá (2013) lies in the management strategy in selected Yorùbá novels. Most of these studies are on historical survey, development, style, comparative analysis and conflict management. Despite the significant works on Yorùbá novels, little attention has been given to issues relating to violence, this study, therefore, examines and evaluates violence in selected post-independence Yorùbá novels. The approach to violence in this work is such that will bring to light the meaning of violence, its causes and its effects in the novels and in real life situations.

The Concept of Violence

The problem of defining violence has occupied a growing number of philosophers, political scientists and peace researchers. As a result, violence, as a term, suffers from a surfeit of meaning based on different scholarly views. This, therefore, posits that violence does not have an encompassing definition

since all the definitions leave a part of violence unanswered or unattended to. Scholars such as Mackenzie (1975, p.39), Tamuno (1978, p.3), Domenach (1981), Weiner (1989, p.37-38), Reis & Roth (1994, p.2), Riedel & Welsh (2002), Morris (2007) opine that violence is the use of physical force which the law of a nation prohibits. Morris (2007) and Domenach (1998) emphasise that such physical force can be overtly or covertly perpetrated by a person against himself/herself, against another person or a group of people and such impermissible physical force or extreme roughness of action results into injury, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation and death. They opine that such force usually cause damage to property, interference on a person's personal freedom or injury to his/her psyche, and other forms of physical injury to a person or a group of people. The damage caused is the main reason for the prohibition of the act by the laws of a nation. Riches (1986, p.8) sees violence as an act of physical thrust deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses which include the laws of a society. Violent acts can be anywhere along a continuum running from an angry and hostile glare which in certain circumstances can cause a degree of harm through verbal abuse, a verbal threat, threatening gestures, a single blow, an attack causing minor injuries, an attack causing major injuries, to an attack causing death (Waddington, Badger & Bull 2004, p.145).

In this paper, violence is taken as the infliction of physical or non-physical (psychological and emotional) pain, harm or injury on a person, group of people or thing by using physical force or thrust, threat, power, deprive techniques, verbal abuse and domination by a person or governmental/non-governmental agencies which is violating human rights.

Theoretical framework

Sociology as a field in social science emerged in the middle of the eighteenth century. The French philosopher August Comte (1798-1857) attempted to prove 'sociology' as the scientific study of the human society. He introduced sociology in his work positive philosophy and defined it as the science of social phenomenal. Sociology of literature is an area of study 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 artist because no work of art stand out of the attitudes, morals, and values of its society since no literary artist has been brought up unexposed to his society and the immediate world around it. Literature like sociology, examines the human life in a realistic way. This is why it is the mirror of the society. Literary artists use their literary works as a mirror and a tool to shape and remold their society.

The mirror image approach of sociology of literature would be adopted for this study. The approach is most suitable for this study as it shows that literature is the direct reflection of various facets of social structure that reflects human society and culture, which is why it is regarded as the mirror of the society. The mirror image approach of the sociology of literature sees literature as documentary, and that it portrays itself as mirror of the age through the novel. It also reflects valor, the standards of behavior, attitudes towards working and middle classes and aspirations of the people in the society.

The Yorùbá novel, just like sociology, deals with all social, political and economic life of the Yorùbá society. It penetrates into the deepest part of social life and expresses the experiences, emotion and attitude of Yorùbá people and society because of its long relationship to the historical development of the society. This theory is most appropriate because it will assist in relating the work of art to its society that serves as mirror which will reveal the reason why criminals tend to use violence to destroy the peaceful existence between characters in the novels and in the real life human society at large. Sociology of literature has independent value and deep faithfulness to reality.

Atótó Arére: A Critical Synopsis

Àlàbá is a young boy left in the lonely care of his father. His father's marriage to his new wife Tàíbátù ushered him into unbearable suffering as his wicked step mother keep exploiting and enslaving him till he was made to drop out of school. His inability to bear his step-mother's constant maltreatment made him ran away from Ìmíní his hometown with her goods on one of his market trip. On his way to Ìbàdàn, he landed at Sáńgo where he passed the night; unfortunately, he woke up to realize that he had been robbed by unknown thief. This left him stranded as he lost all the money he gathered from the sales he made from his step-mother's goods. Àlàbá went through great ordeals to survive to no avail and he later joined an armed robbery group. He met his waterloo on his way to Ìmíní while he was trying to escape after a robbing a bank. Èhìnlààrò, the hunters dog tore his stomach open and was later devoured by scavengers.

A Critical Synopsis of Ọ̀dọ̀ Ìwòyí

The story centers on Ọ̀báfẹ̀mí the son of Mr. and Mrs. Mákíndé. 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. (Túnjí Bákàrè) the son of the very popular Honorable Bákàrè. T. J. became a very close friend with Ọ̀báfẹ̀mí (F. M.). Ọ̀báfẹ̀mí fell in love with Ọ̀mówùnńmí and the love affairs was constantly frustrated and threatened by Páskà a member of Fárí Orò fraternity.

T.J. calmed him down and deluded him to join Mo Murá cult fraternity. Unknowing to him that T. J. and Ọmọwùnmí belongs to the same cult group he was initiated and he killed Páskà his aggressor and few members of Fárí Orò cult group. Ọbáfẹmi later became the head of Mo Murá fraternity. T.J. called on Ọbáfẹmi and the cult members to help him collect the money his father brought home. Ọbáfẹmi and his minions went there but the robbery was serious than they planned, they shot T. J.'s father when he was proving too stubborn. It was the security men in the street that captured them and almost killed T. J. when they realised he was the one that orchestrated the robbery. Though the D.P.O initially hide Ọbáfẹmi and his cohort in Àtapa, the Fárí Orò cult members launched a surprise attack on Ọbáfẹmi and Ọmọwùnmí and killed them.

Synopsis of Háà Ikú Ilé

Ládélé an educated man struggled his way to the top from a wretched background to a rich and influential height. After his education abroad he moved back to Nigeria. He lost his first wife and married another woman who loved him so much. After series of terrible incidences that happened to him, he finally found a ray of hope. Ládélé, was voted as the governor of the state and was almost impeached by his enemies but the tribunal favored him as he returned to power. His opposition did not rest as they bribed his covetous mother-in-law to administer love potion on him, not knowing it actually is potent poison. His selfish mother in-law charmed her daughter in order to administer the so called love portion into his food.

She put the medicine in her husband's breakfast and he went terribly ill after he took his breakfast. He was rushed to the hospital but it was too late for him so he died. His followers involved the police in the mysterious incidence. His wife and mother in-law was arrested. During investigations, they got to know that Fọláké his wife was innocent but her mother and those who sent her to poison him were found guilty, they were sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

Ejọọ Taa Ni?: A Critical Review

Láníyì the only child of his parents was a childhood friend and lover of Sùmbò. Sùmbò gained admission into University of Lagos but Láníyì could not secure admission because he did not pass his examinations. He later got a banking job in Lagos which afforded the two lovebirds to see each other every day. Sùmbò's secret affairs with Dr. Tóla Adédòkun, one of her lecturers became leaked to Láníyì who became heartbroken and seek help from his friends who involved a group of activist in the fight. All effort to stop the relationship proved abortive and Dr. Tóla decided to marry Sùmbò.

The activists sent various letters to stop their wedding, a group of thugs

also tried stopping the wedding but police intervened and Dr. Tólá Adédòkun ordered the arrest of Lánìyì and his friends. Lánìyì was sacked while in prison. After he was released, he embarked on a revenge mission to kill the couples. He was arrested, arraigned, and sentenced to twenty years imprisonment.

Synopsis of Bòbò Àlùtà

Dúrójáyé is the only surviving child of his poor parents. He is a brilliant and smart young man who embraces activism on campus. His activism endeavor gave him the name Bòbò Àlùtà. As a University student in Arásan state of Odùdàwà, he uses all he has to fight the ruling government whenever he felt student's rights are being violated. One of his meritorious achievement as an activist was the battle he won for the secondary school students when the Military government demanded for payment of school fees where free education scheme was the order of the day. Despite his parent's plea, he continually mobilizes the students to fight for their rights and this made him spent longer year than expected in the University. His inability to secure a job after his graduation rendered him unnecessarily quiet. His parents's death three years after his graduation threw him into abject poverty. This jobless condition made him join politics. Luckily for him, the civilian government took over power and his past achievement was recognised as he was appointed as the commissioner for education. The students of Arásan University are joyful over his appointment but their joy turns to sorrow when he refuses to attend to their needs or pay the teachers' salaries. His case became disappointing to those that know his past record as an activist.

Despite several peaceful and violent protests by the students Dúródòlá did not yield to their requests. He later became the governor of the state, at this time he had already grew more wicked, selfish and heartless. The youths in Arásan refuse to receive the outcome of Dúrójáyé's new office in good faith as they stormed the Electoral commission and also destroyed his personal property. This incidence made him run to Àmójá, the federal capital territory. He was also removed from the office after it was found out that the election was rigged. Shortly after this, he became the minister of education; he diverted the money meant for education to a personal business that ended in futility. The news of his mismanagement of fund reaches the President's ears and he removed Dúródòlá from office. The Civillian's terrible way of handling the country made the military government take over forcefully. This took his immunity away, he was hunted down like a commoner and he was arrested while he was trying to escape. He was found dead on the way to the police station.

Violence in Selected Post-Independence Yorùbá novels

The causes and effect of violence as portrayed by the writers of the novels under study will be our focus on this segment.

Corruption

Corruption is one of the obstacles to democracy and the rule of law. Offices and government institutions lose their legitimacy when they are misappropriated for private advantage. It deplete national wealth in that corrupt politicians invest scarce public resources in their personal project rather than high profile projects such as electricity, dams, refineries, pipelines, schools, hospitals, roads among others. Corruption also corrodes the social fabric of society. It destroys people's trust in the political system and leadership.

The existence of corruption in Nigeria is not a new issue, government official's loot money for their private gains and during election; they bribe every quota of the system to win at all costs. This alarming rate of corruption must have made literary artist preoccupy themselves with the theme in their literary works. In *Bòbó Àlútà*, the military government dwells in corruption; they demand that payment of school fees should be made for no good reason where free education was the order of the day. The situation becomes unpalatable for the university students and they decided to protest on behalf of the powerless secondary school students; this protest led to violent clash that resulted in loss of lives and property in Arásan state. Dúrójayé, who is the student union president of Arásan state University, explained the level of corruption in the country in his speech when he was sensitizing the students about why they need to fight for their rights. He says;

À n sanwó iná, a ò gbádùn iná, à n sanwó omi, a ò rómi lò. Gbogbo ojú tí tìbàjé tán, wọn ti di tàkúté ikú. Oúnjẹ wọn bí ojú; kò sóògùn nílẹ̀ iwòsàn; àwọn àgbẹ̀ ní dààmú; gbogbo ojà ló gbówó lóri gè-gè-gè. Owó oṣù òṣisẹ̀ ò tóó bọmú, ṣeni wọn múlẹ̀ ayé nira ko koo ko bí ojú ẹja. Ẹnu ẹkọ́ tí à n rójú jẹ ẹkọ́ òbùn rẹ̀ lára wọn, wọn tún ní ká máa fowò rà á. Wọn wá fẹ́ ẹ́ fúnwa pa pátápátá. Ẹ̀gbọ̀n àwa ò ní gbà fún wọn rárá. *Bòbó Àlútà* 2008:19-20).

We are paying for light, yet we are not enjoying it. We are paying for water, yet it is inaccessible. All the roads are bad thereby becoming death trap. Food is so expensive, no medication in the hospitals; farmers are disturbed; everything in the market is extremely expensive; workers' salaries are up to nothing; they are making life unbearable. The education we are barely enjoying, they are even asking for payment over it. They actually wanted to exploit all we have, but we will not accept it.

This mirrors the society over issues of corruption where affected students gather together to awaken their consciousness over the corrupt nature of their government which is having unbearable effect on them and the members of such society at large. The novelist, therefore, portrays the feelings of the university students by expressing their outburst over the corrupt nature of the ruling government which led the students into violating and vandalising the public property during protest in their quest to stop government from implementing unpleasant policies in the excerpt below. Such action rightly mirrors the ways oppressed masses in Nigeria show that their self realisation was kindled, and how far they can go to fight back from all forms of unpalatable situation enforced by their aggressors. This is encapsulated in the following excerpt:

kété tí àwọn akékòṣọ náà ya wọ ilú ni wọn ti bèrè onírúúrú oṣé ṣíṣe ní pẹ̀rẹ̀, láibẹ̀ṣùbẹ̀gbà. Okò ayókélẹ̀ tuntun kan ni wọn kòkò fi ṣewọ. Ráúráú ni wọn dáná sun ún lẹ̀yìn tí wọn ti ludírẹ̀bà tó wà á ní àlùbolẹ̀. Nọm̀bà tó jẹ̀ tìjọba àpapọ̀ tó wà lára mọtò náà ló jẹ̀ kí wọn tiná ọmọ ọrarabọ̀ ọ. Iná ní jọ a tún ní kò ó ni wọn fọ̀rò ọjọ náà ṣe. Gbígbe tí wọn tún gbéra, ilé-iṣè ètò èkọ̀ ni wọn mórí lé, (Bòbò Àlútà 2008:23)

As soon as the students storm the town, they started all various types of violent acts, without hesitation. They began their acts from burning a brand new car after beating the driver to a pulp. It was the federal government plate number placed on the vehicle that attracted their attention into burning it. The matter became uncontrollably explosive that fateful day. As they took off again, they headed towards the ministry of education.

The masses reaction to corruption as portrayed by the writer became out of hand as the angry students stormed the government agencies and vandalised government properties as they burned down the ministry of education, the ministry of information and culture, and the institute of agriculture where they killed all the livestock. The level of violence perpetrated by the aggrieved students escalated beyond control after their President Dúrójayé was arrested by the police officers; they decided to destroy every government property they see to send signals to the ruling government that they are no longer ready to bear corruption. Their violent action was characterised by loss of lives and properties. One can aver from the above incident that violence is not the right option because it disrupts the peace and harmony in the society thereby results into despicable states many times.

Oppression

Oppression in the society always ends tragically because the oppressed will do everything they can to free themselves from all forms of oppression. The masses who are the oppressed think of their horrible state of poverty and powerlessness as the enabling factors which stand as bourgeois' wealth accessing secrets. They, therefore, employ violence as a tool used to fight back and set themselves free from the invisible shackles and chains of the rich and powerful, and they also create awareness of the fact of their refusal to keep dwelling in the hideous position created for them. In the selected novels, oppression always has a violence ending.

Ọbáfẹmí was constantly oppressed by Paska, a member of Fárí Orò cult, who wanted to start an intimate relationship with Ọmọwùnmí but his effort was cut short by Ọbáfẹmí who had already been her lover and her favorite, being the most brilliant guy on campus; he was challenged by Paska when he was sitting with his girlfriend, Ọmọwùnmí in *Ọdọ-Ìwóyí*:

Ọbáfẹmí àti Ọmọwùnmí jókódó ní abẹ igi kan lójó kan, wọn dìjọ ní tàkùròsọ lóri ojó òlẹ wọn. Bí wọn ẹẹ ní sọ ẹyí lówó ọmọkùnrin kan rìn súnmọ wọn, ó wo ojú Ọmọwùnmí, ó sì tún wo ojú Ọbáfẹmí ó ní, “Ìwọ, ẹẹ F.M. ni wọn ní pè ẹ ni àbí M.F.M.? Mo ní kí o jáwọ nínú ọrọ Mọwùnmí, o kọ, o ní o ò ní í jáwọ. Ẹ ó ò digbà tí o bá kan ìdín nínú iyọ? (Ọdọ Ìwóyí 2006: 22).

Ọbáfẹmí, and Ọmọwùnmí sat under a tree on one fateful day, they were discussing about their future. As they were doing this, one man went close to them and looks at their faces and said “You! Are you the one they call F.M. or M.F.M.? I ask you to leave Mọwùnmí, you refused, and you said you would not leave her. Is it until you meet with trouble?”

Ọbáfẹmí's constant oppression by the powerful Páskà led him to his friend, who in collaboration with Ọmọwùnmí initiated him into Mo Múra cult. The novelist use this case to showcase the extent in which those suffering from constant oppression in the society can go to set themselves free from their oppressor by seeking help from anybody with higher power, who could help them solve their problems. This mirrors how most young folks on campus join secret cults to gain power to fight oppression coming from their fellow students, lecturers or school authority and the government, as they usually constitute themselves into authority outfits that challenge and weaken constituted higher authority and often times render such higher authority useless. After Ọbáfẹmí's initiation, he got help from his new cult members as they vengefully stormed Fárí orò cult and butchered Paska and two of his fellow cult members:

“Èmi náà wá ti ẹtán wàyi ò, mo ẹtán láti ẹ́gun fún ẹgbẹ FÁRÍ ORÒ. Kí ilẹ tó mó,

mo fẹ́ kí Páskà, Yẹmí àti Kọ́ládé di òkú.” Àwọn ọmọ ẹgbé kígbe, “Ó DI MÍMÚRA, Ó DI MÍMÚJE, Ó DÌMÙLÈ.” T.J ní, “sùgbón kí a tó lọ, ẹ jé kí á sọ F.M di okùnrin.” Báyí ni wón ṣeètò gbogbo fún Qbáfẹmi, bí ó tiẹ ẹ wí pé ẹrù n bàá, dídarapọ mọ ẹgbé náà kò sì tẹ ẹ lórùn; síbè, ó fi ara rẹ sílẹ lábẹ ẹrù, ó sì di ọmọ ẹgbé MO MÚRA. QgbaYunifásítí Kakañfò kangógó ní òwúró ojó kejì. Gbogbo wọn kédùn ikú àwọn elegebé wọn męta kan tí àwọn kan kun bí ẹran ní òru mójú (Òdọ Ìwòyí 2006:31)

“Now I am ready; I am ready to launch war against FÁRÍ ORÒ cult members. Before dawn, I want Páskà, Yẹmí and Kọ́ládé dead.” The cult members scream “Ó DI MÍMÚRA, Ó DI MÍMÚJE, Ó DÌMÙLÈ.” T.J says, “Before we go, we should turn F.M into a man.” This was how all preparations was made for Qbáfẹmi, in as much as he was scared and was not satisfied with his initiation into the group yet, he surrendered himself under fear; he then became member of MO MÚRA cult. Kakañfò university campus was tensed the following morning, as they all mourn the death of three of their fellow students that were butchered overnight.

Paska’s oppression towards Qbáfẹmi and his girlfriend ended tragically as Qbáfẹmi gained support from his powerful friends on campus. His new position in the secret society helps him to confront Paska and his friends who then paid dearly with their lives. This scenario captures the happenings in human society as the oppressed seek all possible help to set themselves free from their aggressors without limits.

Threat

Threat is an unhealthy use of power on a fellow-man. Threat is as serious as violence in the society because the threat of violence is violence in itself. Threat makes the victims feel intimidated, frightened and diminished. It violates one’s right to freewill. The issue of threat is also evidence in the novel *Ejọ Taani?* as Láníyí’s friends and concerned activists joined forces to threaten the promiscuously adamant Dr Tólá Adédòkun into leaving Sùmbò, whom he stubbornly snatched from their friend. They sent him a letter that shows their evil intentions and their readiness to cut his life short if he refuses to leave her for good:

Tólá, bí o bá fẹran ara rẹ, ju sùmbò sílẹ kí o gbé ilé ayé, sùgbón bí o bá lè dánwa wò nípa síṣe orí kunkun, èyí tí yóò dùnwa nípe o kò ní sí láyé mọ láti sọ ohun tí ojú rẹ rí. Sùgbón èyí paápáà kò lè fi bẹẹ dùnwa nítorí ọrọ rẹ yóò jẹ ẹkọ fún àwọn olùkọ ilẹ-ẹkọ gigaYunifásítí jákẹjádò ilẹ wa tí ó jẹ pé gbogbo àwọn ọmọbinrin tí ó bá ti lè wá kàwẹ lábẹ wọn ni wón ní láti tọwò. (Ejọ Taa Ni? 2006:77-78)

Tólá, if you love yourself, leave Sùmbò and live, but if you test us by being pig-headed, it will be painful to us that you would not live to tell the tale. Still, it would not be so painful to us because your story will serve as a lesson to all university lecturers all over our land that always believe in having a taste of all female students under their tutelage.

Dr Tólá Adédòkun got scared by the deadly letter sent to him by Láníyí's lovers, helpers, and sympathisers when they left him no choice as the letter was dictating condition of his death. He became weak and troubled over the whole issue and he almost regrets having coveting Sùmbò from her ex-lover, which is the reason behind the constant threats and humiliation he received from students and everybody supporting Láníyí's course, especially over his record of promiscuity. To free himself from the constant threat, he got Láníyí and his friend's arrested, during their stay at police custody, Láníyí lost his job, his loss of job and the undue punishment he got from the couple led to a terrible violent attack he launched on them. He actualised his threat by invading the couple's home to kill them as seen in the excerpt below:

Ó ní kí gbogbo wọn ká ọwọ wọn sókè kí wọn kọ ojú sí ògiri. Lójú ibọn òyìnbó! Èpè òyìnbó ọmọ ajà lóòjò! Sùmbò bá bèrè sí ní bẹ Láníyí pé kó dáríjì òun nítorí ìrísí Láníyí fihàn pé ó ọ̀tán láti gba èmí òun àti ọkọ rẹ. Ìwànwara ni Láníyí fi da ibọn bo tokotaya Adédòkunnì ó bá ọ̀yán, kò dúró gbobè mó (Èjọọ Taa Ni? 2006:129)

He ordered them to raise their hands and face the wall under the threat of a gun, a sophisticated weapon that acts instantly! Sùmbò began to beg Láníyí to forgive her because of his outlook that shows he is desperately ready to kill them. Láníyí hastily fired the couple and took to his heels.

The writer of the novel above described Láníyí as a ruthless person who will stop at nothing to fight his enemies till he sees desired result. He follows his constant threat towards the couples with a violent attack as he attempted to take their lives. Fortunately, the couples survived the attack but they will never be able to enjoy their lives as Láníyí's gunshot rendered the couples disabled.

Deceit

Deceit is a crafty way of misleading someone or a group of people using falsehood. The act of deceit in the selected novels leads to violent or tragic end between the characters. In *Atótó Arére*, after the series of unfortunate events that befell Àlàbá when he ran away from his wicked step-mother and his father who constantly maltreat and enslave him and he landed in Ifẹ. At Ifẹ he met his

insensitive boss that sent him away without any form of hearing, payment or compensation for the work he had earlier done, but decided to throw him out because his wife found Àlàbá trying to unlock her box under their children's order and permission. Àlàbá experienced Sàmínù's betrayal when he ran away with the money they both worked hard to earn as newspaper sellers which rendered him poor again. In his quest for survival, Àlàbá decided to use the skill of deceit he learnt from Sàmínù to trick the groundnut seller he met on the way as reported below:

Wọ́ ñ ẹ̀ wòdùwòdù lẹ́dò ẹ̀lẹ̀pà. Àlàbá kó sààrín wọn. Ó gbiyànjú àtì-rántí ọ̀nà tí Sàmínù gbà tí ó fi kẹ̀pà láisanwó, tí ó sì gba sẹ̀njì lówọ́ iyá ẹ̀lẹ̀pà ni òkè sodà... kíákíá ẹ̀lẹ̀pà tiwọ̀n iwọ̀n agolo pẹ̀lẹ̀bẹ̀ méjì, ó rún un, ó fẹ́ ẹ, ó di egbirin rẹ, ó nà án sí Àlàbá. Owó dà? Ẹ̀bí mo ti fún ọ́ lówo! Èlò lo fún mi? Nígba wo lo fún mi? (Atótó Arére 1981:48- 49)

They are all rushing at the groundnut seller's stall. Àlàbá entered into the gathering. He tried to remember the ways Sàmínù used in getting groundnut without paying and how he got paid balance by the groundnut seller at òkè sodà... quickly the groundnut seller measured two little cups; she squeezed, blew, wrapped it and handed it over to Àlàbá. Can I have your money? But I already gave you the money! How much did you give me? When did you give it to me?

Things did not end well for Àlàbá as the groundnut seller raised alarm about the unsuccessful trick of deceit the little boy tried to use on her. The smart no nonsense groundnut seller and the angry buyers descended on him and beat him beyond recognition, as they realise he is a prankster. He was treated like every other street criminal who were killed in the act of deceiving and stealing from innocent people, especially innocent business women. He was almost killed by the angry mob as cited below:

Ibi tí Àlàbá gbọ́ mọ́ ní ọ̀rọ̀ ẹ̀nu niyí, àfi ọ̀jò àbàrá tó bèrè sí í rọ́ lé e lóri, tí kálukú ñ yan ibi tó bá fẹ́ kí bẹ̀ndẹ́ sí Àlàbá lára. Ìgbátí, ìgbámú, wọn paá bí e jò àjẹ, wọn lúú bí ibàrà (Atótó Arére 1981:49)

This was the last utterance Àlàbá heard; except for the showers of beating that landed on his head as everybody chose their preferred spot on Àlàbá's body. It was different types of slaps they gave him as he was extremely and severely beaten.

Deceit like this always leads to loss of lives, if there is no intervention. This is an obvious portrayal of events that lead to jungle justice like lynching and immolation of offenders most times in the society. Lots of hungry, homeless

children and petty thieves like Àlàbá, who base their mode of survival on deceiving people to get food, money or other items from sellers had lost their lives and are still losing it either by getting beaten to death or by getting burnt to ashes by vengeful citizens, who take laws into their own hands without waiting for legal justice.

Betrayal

Bólárínwá (2014:216) defines betrayal as the breaking or violation of a presumptive contract, trust or confidence that produces moral and psychological conflict within a relationship among individuals, between organisations or between individuals and organisations. In *Òdọ̀ Ìwòyí*, T.J who was Ọbáfẹmi's friend and ex Mo Múrá cult president, who handed over to Ọbáfẹmi, betrayed his own biological father because of his selfish intention. He realised his father brought a huge sum of money home and decided to inform his cult members to attack their home like armed robbers so that he can gain possession of his father's money for his personal gains; he also promised to share the money with the cult members in the excerpt below:

Ó fi tó wọn léti pé bàbá rẹ ẹ gbé owó kan tí ó tó míliọ̀nù lònà métàdínlògbòn náírà sí ilé. Ó ní òun n fẹ kí àwọn omọ-egbẹ MO MÚRÁ wá gégé bíi olè ní òru ojọ yìí gan-an, kí wọn sì wá gba owó náà lẹwọ̀ bàbá òun (Òdọ̀ Ìwòyí 2006:42)

He informed them that his father just brought some money about twenty-seven million naira home. He said he wanted MO MÚRÁ cult members to storm their house like armed robber that night and that he wanted the money taken from his father.

Things ended violently as Ọbáfẹmi shoots the stubborn Ọtúnba Bákàrè, T.J's father as he blatantly refuses to hand the money over to them after much plea from his son. T.J and his cult members lose their patience and started fighting Ọbáfẹmi who shot his father which was against their agreement. T.J did not want any harm to happen to his father, but Ọbáfẹmi could not continue in such fruitless plea so he acted against their agreement as he tried killing his friend's father:

Inú T.J. kò dùn sí ohun tí F.M. ẹ yìi. Ó bínú, ó kọ ojú ìjà sí F.M., ó ní, “Àà! Ọbáfẹmi, a ò dìjọ sọ ọ báyì kẹ! Mi ò ní kí ẹ wá bá mi pa bàbá mi o. Owó ni mo ní kí ẹ wá gbà.” (Òdọ̀ Ìwòyí 2006:46)

T.J was not happy with what F.M did. He angrily faced F.M and said “Àà. Ọbáfẹmi, this was not according to our plan! I did not ask you to come and murder my father, all I ask was for you to get the money.”

Their argument was interrupted by the group of security at work who overheard the sound of Ọ̀báfẹ̀mí's gun from Ọ̀túnba's house as they launched a counter attack at T.J's cult members without realising that it was Ọ̀túnba's son and his cohort who came to rob his innocent old father because of money.

Politics

The Nigerian politicians for instance, have an age-old attitude of employing all form of violence in as much as it would help them to meet their desired goal. Ozeigbe (2007) gave an instance of violence citing utterance given by former President Ọ̀básánjọ during the pre-election stage, when he declared that the forth coming election would be 'a do or die affair'. This statement gave rise to harassment, violent and intimidation of opposition and prevented them from either standing out for electoral offices or coming out to vote. Ladan (2006) identifies greed abuses, election rigging, corruption and abuse of legal powers as the causes of electoral violence in Nigeria. Politicians believe that the end (stealing political power) justifies the means (that is all forms of electoral violence). In support of this claim, Ọ̀básánjọ reiterated that: "I stand by my utterances. I will campaign. This is a do or die affair for me and the PDP" (Ọ̀básánjọ, 2007).

This can be likened to what happened in the novel *Háà ikú ilé!* When political thugs fight their opposition party just the way it is in Nigeria and the Yorùbá society at large. They breed enmity and rivalry and use any tactics that would make them defeat their opponents during and after political campaigns without minding if the peace of the society is disrupted. An example of such scenario of political enmity between Arábàbà bí àṣá political party and their opponent is seen in the excerpt below:

Kálukú àwọn ọmọ ẹgbẹ́ méjèjè ni wọn n ta ogbon bí èròjà ọbẹ́ yóò ẹe dun ọbẹ́ òṣẹ̀lú wọn, ẹeni wọn n lẹ́rì sí wọn tí wọn sì n bá ara wọn ẹe orogún lásìkò ètò ìpolongò ìbò. (*Háà ikú ilé!* 2014:60)

Each of the members of the two political parties was using different strategies that would make their parties victorious: they were threatening each other and were engaging in rivalry between themselves during electoral campaign.

The type of enmity and rivalry that evolves between rival political parties and their supporters before, during and after election often leads to all forms of violence and vengeance as political rivals kill, maim and destroy the property of all the perceived enemy of their political goals which is common among political parties in the Nigeria settings, especially the very popular PDP

(People's Democratic Party) and APC (All Progressive Congress). The excerpt below serves as evidence to this:

Òpò igbà ni àwọn tòṣì olóyè Olówónyò máa ní wàako pèlú àwọn tòṣì egbé Arábàbà-bí-Àṣà, tí wọn sì máa ní dákó fún ara wọn nípa ṣíṣa ara wọn lógbé yánnayànnà nígbà mùràn ni àwọn jàndùkú wònyí ní da ilú rú, tí wọn sì ní ba dúkiá àwọn egbé alátaḱò wọn jé. (Háà ikú ilé! 2014:61)

Many a times, chief Olówónyò thugs always have confrontations with Arábàbà-bí-Àṣà political thugs; they engage in matcheting each other like animal. These criminals disrupt the peace of the society; they equally destroy the property of their opposition parties.

Dangerous and life threatening act is common before, during and after election in Nigeria. Such reckless acts destroy the peace and harmony of the society, as it puts the citizens in panic, danger and disarray. It also causes loss of lives of innocent citizens, especially people who are not members of any political party, harmless voters, aged people, harmless children and those traveling across such dangerous area unknowingly.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that violence exists in the human society which is why it is explored by Yorùbá literary writers in their diverse works. We can infer that corruption; oppression, threat, deceit, betrayal and politics are part of the existing societal violence causing phenomena especially in the Yorùbá society in order to attain personal goals. It is established that violence disrupt the peace and harmony in the society and it results into despicable states many times which includes loss of lives, loss of properties, insecurity and health risks in the Yorùbá society and the Nigerian society in general. An instance in the contemporary society was the case of #Endsars movement that started on social media from the 9th to 21st October 2020 which leads to a protest that ended in loss of lives and properties across Nigeria. This study has proved that Yorùbá literary writers are conscious of their society and they mirror the happenings around them in their creative works to correct the anomalies in the society.

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