

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

AN EYE FOR AN EYE WILL MAKE
THE WHOLE WORLD BLIND

—.: Outline :.—

► Introduction

► Thesis Statement

Revenge fuels the cycle of violence and suffering, making people blind to the possibility of reconciliation that leads to perpetual destruction; However, accountability for actions ought to be administered in the form of justice in order to maintain the social order.

► The Distinction Between Concepts of Revenge and Justice

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

► The Cycle of Revenge and its Implications

[Individual]

i) Individual level impact of revenge:

Cognitive Dissonance Theory gives the psychological impact of revenge on an individual.

ii) Social level impact of revenge:

mob violence and cultural conflicts based upon vengeance rule out social cohesion

iii) Political level impact of revenge:

Analysis of vengeance and retributive politics in Pakistan and its implications

iv) International level impact of revenge:

Revenge driven foreign policies and their implications.

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

► Measures to Promote Tolerance and
 * Quench the Fire of Revenge

► Why people choose Revenge Over Justice

i) Weak writ of state : when the state is ^{unjust,} irresponsible and inefficient, people take matters in their own hands

ii) Lack of education causes ignorance of peaceful conflict resolution

iii) The Social construction of revenge :
 The Social Construction of Revenge
 (1966) by Berger and Luckman

► How to Curb the Cycle of Revenge

i) Historical example of tolerance over revenge : conquest of Makkah

ii) Mozi's philosophy to curb societal evils like vengeance: "When one throws to me a peach, I return to him a plum"

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

► Pragmatic Measures to Inhibit Vengeance:

i) Strengthening the writ of state
In order to restore public trust
on justice.

ii) Improving Education to promote
compassion and strategic conflict
resolution

iii) Promoting empathetic leadership:

"Resentment is like drinking
poison and then hoping it will
kill your enemies"

Nelson Mandela

Mandela and his "Truth and Recon-
ciliation Commission" led to
healing of grievances rather
than a cycle of revenge.

► Conclusion

An Eye for an Eye Will Make the Whole World Blind

⁶⁶Every action has an equal ~~and~~ opposite reaction⁹⁹ says Newton in his third law of motion. Though crucial to the sustenance of natural order, this phenomena becomes the source of perpetual destruction in the social order in the form of vengeance. Revenge fuels a cycle of violence and suffering, making people blind to the possibility of reconciliation that leads to perpetual destruction ; However, accountability for ones actions ought to be administered in the form of justice in order to maintain the social order. The urge for revenge occupies the individual's mind, making one biased upto an extent where one ~~cannot~~ can not distinguish between

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

right and wrong. On a broader scale, vengeance fuels societal conflicts, as well as international conflicts, ruling out the probability of peace.

The root cause behind the concept of "an eye for an eye" can be traced back to the social construction of revenge or vengeance.

Nevertheless, discouraging vengeance does not mean discouraging justice.

Justice is crucial for maintenance of peace and a healthy social order.

Moreover, lessons from history and philosophy as well as some pragmatic measures including a strong^{theneed} judicial system and increased literacy rate can play a significant role in quenching the fire of vengeance.

When any harmful or negative reaction is reciprocated in the same way, revenge is said to be accomplished. However, one

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

can only take revenge upto an extent one is capable of.

Revenge satisfies internal grievances but it does not serve justice. It only creates unrest and disparity. A poor person may not be able to take revenge for the persecution he is a victim of, but that person is capable of seeking justice because justice does not depend upon one's social status or might, it only sees what is just and right.

Revenge affects an individual's ability to distinguish between right and wrong, rendering one narrow minded so that one is unable to see the broader picture. The Cognitive Dissonance Theory highlights the psychological impact of the thought of revenge on an individual. This theory says that individuals seeking revenge tend to justify their harmful, immoral or evil activities by fra-

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

-ming it as justice. Engaging in revenge can lead to a cycle of retaliation, where each act of retaliation demands further justification. This results in the long term distress which affects one's cognitive ability, making one blind to the solution of the problem.

Thus, the essence of revenge has adverse impact on the individual mindset which propagates further to the broader level.

Political vengeance makes the government blind to the public welfare, leading to a cycle of political infighting and inefficient policy framework. Political vengeance leads government to prioritise vengeance over collective public welfare. A 2018 survey by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDT) found that only

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

15% of Pakistanis had confidence in their political parties, whereas 65% blamed the ongoing political infighting between ~~PAN~~ and PPP Pakistan Muslim League-N (PMLN) and Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf (PTI) for this mistrust. Furthermore, this political rivalry also affected Pakistan's reputation at an international level. "Pakistan's Corruption Fall in ~~CP~~ Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) rankings is a clear signal that entrenched political infighting and weak institutional governance are taking toll" says the Transparency International. Thus, ~~Re~~ revenge causes aloofness in politicians from the original purpose, that is public welfare.

Vengeance is a social evil that causes unrest in a society. It can prompt emotions of a society in a negative direction leading

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

to societal conflicts and mob-violence. The ethnic sectarian conflict of Parachinar, Pakistan, is a significant example of societal conflict based upon vengeance. The exchange of deadly attacks by the Shia and Sunni communities in Parachinar have produced fatal and catastrophic results. In November 2024, a convoy of 200 ~~Kashmiri~~ Shia muslims vehicles transporting Shia muslims from Parachinar to Peshawar was attacked resulting in 54 casualties. In response to this attack, a Sunni dominated market in Parachinar was set to fire resulting in 30 casualties. Thus revenge results in death and destruction on both ends and this vicious cycle continues until the blindfold of vengeance is removed.

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

International conflicts based upon vengeance also yield perpetual destruction on both ends. The dispute between Palestine and Israel, though the Palestinians were the ones who were victims of the persecution of Israel, was escalated due to attacks and retaliations between Hamas and Israeli forces. The cycle of vengeance was so vicious that ~~in~~ since October 7 2023, 46000 Palestinians have succumbed to it. Moreover, the essence of humanity was lost under the shadow of ~~was~~ unprecedented war crimes committed by Israel. One can say that ~~the~~ most of the world went blind and justified the persecution under the excuse of vengeance.

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

The factors producing conducive environment for revenge include the lack of trust in justice regulatory institutions. Had the United Nations (UN) done its job properly, the (Israel-Palestine) conflict would have been resolved properly. Moreover, at societal level, the social construction of revenge and illiteracy also add up to the cause.

The weak writ of the arbitrary institutions, failing to provide justice, causes people to take matter in their own hands. The absence of strong law enforcement in Parachinas allowed the cycle of vengeance to continue. Moreover, 5000 people have been killed in Congo between 2012 and 2022 due to tribal conflicts. Since there were no strong institutions to ensure arbitra-

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

-tion, the tribes of Congo, ~~kept~~ have been fighting till today and are stuck in the vicious cycle of vengeance resulting in eternal conflict.

The lack of education also causes people to choose revenge over justice. Education builds awareness of legal rights and punishments, strong social network that supports dialogue rather than kinetic measures and essence of humanity and compassion. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) reports that communities with literacy rate below 50% in Sub-Saharan Africa see 30% more incidents of revenge based justice. ~~rather~~ This shows that lack of education may lead to reliance on traditional systems instead of

formal legal processes.

Like many other social evils, revenge also roots back to the social construct.

Berger and Luckman wrote "The Social Construction of Reality", which explores how society constructs shared understandings including the concept of revenge. They argue that the concepts societies develop stories and traditions with rules about right and wrong, how ~~it~~^{they} should be responded to in the form of revenge. The tradition of "honour killing" can also be better understood in the light of this concept.

Some historical incidents and philosophical ideas provide the key to the inhibition of the cycle of vengeance thro-
The virtues of tolerance

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

and compassion can put an end to this perpetual conflict.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), during the victory of Makkah, could have followed the nomadic tribal cultural norms and he could have destroyed the homes of his enemies or have them killed; However, he rather chose peace over vengeance and spared all his enemies resulting in the establishment of the first Islamic welfare state.

He became the beacone of hope and peace, propogating blessings and peace. Similarly, Mori, a famous Chinese philosopher, say that "~~If one throws to me a~~" if one throws to him a peach, he returns to him a plum". This phrase suggests that peace and prosperity can be achieved through

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

reciprocation and amplification of positive actions rather than the negative ones like revenge.

Pragmatic measures to mitigate the harms of vengeance can be taken to ensure peace and prosperity. Such measures can put an end to the cycles of vengeance. For example, strengthening the writ of can restore the public trust on justice. If the writ of state is strong, one can appeal in court with confidence against the injustices and the wrong doings rather than taking matter in one's own hands.

Had the people of Parachinar relied on the state for justice (if the writ was strong and the state was just), the deaths of hundreds

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

of people could have been avoided. If the international arbitration were strong, the conflict of Palestine would have been nipped in the bud. Thus the strong will of state and the judicial institutions are necessary to put out the fire of vengeance.

Moreover, promotion of education promotes compassion and strategic conflict resolution. An educated pupil would prefer negotiation, discourse and argument over fighting and killing each other. Education teaches empathy and promotes awareness of legal systems, which eventually reduces the pursuit of vengeance. Northern European countries with strong legal frameworks

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

and a good education system are less prone to the evil of vengeance.

According to the European Social Survey, only 10-15% respondents in the Scandinavian countries preferred to take the law in their own hands as compared to the rest of the world where this figure is above 40%.

Hence, education is significant in order to maintain peace in the society.

Empathetic leadership plays a very important role in maintenance of peace. where the leaders like Adolf Hitler cause genocide and destruction, the leaders like Nelson Mandela promote forgiveness, compassion, tolerance and

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

peace. Mandela established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to ~~pro~~ investigate and deal with the grievances of past through future policies and empathy rather than vouching for vengeance like Hitler. This approach caused nation wide healing, steering South Africa away from a path of perpetual retribution. He demoted vengeance by saying "Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies".

when it all comes to the final word, it can be said that "An eye for an eye" approach does make the world blind to the endless possibilities for a better

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

future and it retains the cycle of revenge causing endless harm and destruction.

Strategic conflict resolution can be made possible through better education so that the mind of people becomes open to better options than taking revenge. Moreover, strong arbitration and strong moral values can also provide a solution to these conflicts. In the world of the despots and persecutors, people like Nelson Mandela also exist who promote peace over fighting. An eye for an eye can sure make the world blind, but reciprocation through positivity and compassion can also make the world a better place.

