

Satire as Protest in an Indigenous Festival: The case of Èfè

Ade Adejumo(PhD)

General Studies Department, Ladoko Akintola University of Technology Ogbomoso, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: Various Societies have over time devised strategies of beating erring members of their communities back to the communally sanctioned path of behaviours. So also are those in position of authority, who exhibit tendencies to abuse such offices subjected to public sanctions which manifest in diverse forms. Among the Yoruba, various corrective verbal forms have evolved. These include such Yoruba traditional corrective verbal sanctions as ‘Yèyè’ (mockery), eebu (invectives), apara (jest) and Èfè/Àfèdásèfè (satirizing) that have evolved over time. This paper focuses on Èfè (the Satiric act) which is an indigenous festival among some Yoruba sub-groups. Specifically, it examines the verbal content of the festival which have been used over times as an instrument of protesting the perceived injustices by government, institutions or individuals in high positions. The data are drawn from recorded festivals and are subjected to sociological analysis through the prism of a literary scholar. The paper concludes that Èfè is still a very useful verbal instrument of social engineering especially in our present vice-riddled socio-political realities. It can be adapted as an instrument of mass mobilization and mass education in our electronic media in the combat of anti-social conducts.

KEYWORDS: Èfè/Àfèdásèfè (satirizing), Yèyè (Mockery), Eebu ((invectives), Protest, Festival, Social engineering, mass mobilization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Èfè/Gèlèdè tradition has received deep attention from scholars over the years. These include scholars like Ulli Beier (1958), Frank Speed (1968), Peggy Harper (1970), Jacques Kerchache (1973), Jacques Bernolles (1973), Anthony Asiwaju (1975, 1976, Afolabi Olabimtan (1970, 1972, 1981), Gabriel Fayomi (1982), Benedict M. Ibitokun (1981, 1987, 1993), Emmanuel Babatunde (1998), Robert Thompson (1971, 1974), Henry and Margaret Drewal (1974a, 1974b, 1975, 1983), S.O Oyedepo (1979), Babtunde Lawal (1996), Ronke Adesanya (1997), Dele Layiwola (1998) and Olu Obafemi (1984). These studies can be classified broadly into three groups, namely: socio-historical, litero-anthropological and litero-sociological.

Beier’s (1958) pioneering work on the Gèlèdè ceremonies in Porto Novo and Kétu was an eye witness account, which reported on the evolutionary notion that the Gèlèdè cult was associated with women. This was traced to the historical fact that a time in the past, women were regarded as more powerful than men. This power might not be unconnected with the association of women with the Àjé cult. Harper (1970), offers that, in Gèlèdè dance performance, the accent is on entertainment and the masks performed to please Iyalase and her women in particular and the spectators in general (89). He therefore submits that the dance movement patterns of the Gèlèdè performances in Ijio “are an expression of social and ritual functions of the dance and the dramatic intentions of the performers” (89). According to the critic, in the Èfè/Gèlèdè art, the images depicted on the wooden masks are not employed merely to appeal to the beholders, they also express diverse shades of meanings as they reveal both mythical and historical antecedents of such performances. Essentially, Beier’s work uses the Gèlèdè tradition to instantiate the immense socio-political power which the women wielded in the traditional culture. This power was conferred on them by the Àjé cult which exclusively belongs to them and through which they exert both physical and extra-physical influences on their society. Layiwola (1998), while seeing Gèlèdè as both festival (odun) and religion, acknowledges the immense influence that women exert on the tradition. He agrees with both Beier and Ibitokun that the Èfè/Gèlèdè mask perform to please and appease the witches “who can bring grievous harm to their detractors, especially the daring male chauvinist.” (58).

Drewal and Drewal (1983) in their book, Gèlèdè: Art and Female Power among the Yoruba, provide information on varieties of Gèlèdè art form in Egbado-Òyó colony and Kétu community. To them, Kétu and Ìdòfà are the originators of Gèlèdè art form. They perceive Èfè/ Gèlèdè as a variant of the Yoruba Egungun. This assertion has however been disputed by Ibitokun (1993) who describes it as inaccurate and misleading. The misconception, he says, is as a result of the fact that the Drewal’s “research findings on Gèlèdè/Èfè have been drawn from predominantly Egbado-Òyó community of Nigeria where Egúngún cult holds droit de cuite” (20).

They also contend that while *Ẹfẹ* is a male masquerade, *Gẹlẹdẹ* is a female affair. This is aptly captured in their own words;

In Egbado there is an overwhelming preponderance of female masks,
and in Lagos all masquerades appear, however in *Ẹfẹ* night and
there is general agreement among members that *Ẹfẹ* is male
and *Gẹlẹdẹ* is female... (Drewal and Drewal, 1983: 147)

This gender cleavages between *Ẹfẹ* and *Gẹlẹdẹ* is also attested to by Adesanya (1977). She acknowledges the influence of the *Ọyọ* Egungun cult on the *Gẹlẹdẹ* art in Egbado (Yewa). As pointed out earlier, Ibitokun (1993) disagrees with the Drewals who describe *Ẹfẹ/Gẹlẹdẹ* as Egungun. He emphasizes the difference between Egúngún and *Ẹfẹ*. According to the critic, while Egungun is celestial, *Ẹfẹ* is terrestrial. Beside, these two traditions can be distinguished on a geographical basis: Egúngún is associated with *Ọyọ*, while *Gẹlẹdẹ* is claimed to belong to the Kétu people. Furthermore, Egúngún, Ibitokun argues, is predominately a male affair that has to do with ancestral worship whereas *Gẹlẹdẹ* is a female cult. Ibitokun submits further that; while Egungun masquerade simulates, speaking with a guttural voice to be actual timbre of the dead, the *Ẹfẹ* masker sings with a clear, natural and melodious human voice. In addition, in a male dominated society, *Gẹlẹdẹ* provides a means of restoring male-female balance. In the critic's words, "it is the female gender carnival in the phallia-autocracy" (Ibitokun 1993: 38). This in essence means that the *Gẹlẹdẹ* carnival provides a means of breaking unwarranted male dominance in the society. It is essential to note that Ibitokun (1993) strictly works within a dramatic art/sociological perspective.

Olabimtan (1981) takes a poetic look at *Ẹfẹ/ Gẹlẹdẹ* in Egbado, Kétu - Yoruba communities. He sees *Ẹfẹ/ Gẹlẹdẹ* poet as one who performs the role of the mass media. Thus, *Ẹfẹ/ Gẹlẹdẹ* poet is to inform, educate, entertain and voice out public opinion. The act of informing and educating comes in when he serves as a means of reminding people of their responsibility to conform to the wishes of their society. The task of entertaining is achieved through acts of singing, dancing and drumming. The *Ẹfẹ/ Gẹlẹdẹ* poet also takes up the task of defending the cause of justice of any member of the society.

The power to achieve the goal of influencing any decision as it affects an individual society rests on two main factors: the attachment of the poet to the *Gẹlẹdẹ* cult which itself has a strong link with the cult of *Ajẹ* and the freedom enjoyed by the poet to express publicly what could not be said directly to a man's face. To Olabimtan, *Ẹfẹ* messages are always credible since the composition is based on veritable and dependable sources in the community.

Olabimtan concludes that *Ẹfẹ*'s role as a social crusader remain the same in the contemporary society as it was in the past. It does not only whip up sentiments against social deviants, it also influences public opinions and attitudes towards institutions through the instrumentality of its poetic and rhythmic rendition.

Babatunde (1988) applies the gender approach to look at Kétu migration story. He discusses and analyses Yoruba myths in order to bring out the prominent and potent roles of women in the face of male weakness. He specifically mentions the role of Iyalase, the priestess of Iyanla/ Iya un.

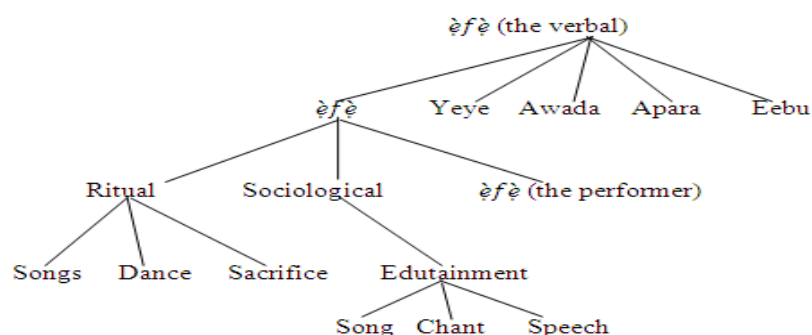
As an art-historian, Adesanya (1997) examines the verbal and visual characteristics of *Gẹlẹdẹ* in order to unravel the mystery surrounding its origin. She sees *Ẹfẹ/Gẹlẹdẹ* as a variant of the Yoruba Egungun. However, she believes that *Gẹlẹdẹ*'s social relevance is different from that of egungun since it does not concern itself with ancestral worship. *Gẹlẹdẹ*, to her, is a female affair and the essence is to bring about gender balance for justice, order and harmony. Tracing the history of Kétu and its trade link in arts with other Yoruba Kingdoms, she asserts that *Ọyọ* artistic influence is reflected during the performance of *Gẹlẹdẹ*. This is seen in the frequency of the appearance of images and symbols of Sango and Orisa-oko in *Gẹlẹdẹ* corpus. Using the visual, oral and written evidences on *Gẹlẹdẹ*, she concludes that *Gẹlẹdẹ* is an artistic hybrid of the cultural milieu of Kétu and its Yoruba neighbours with significant influence from *Ọyọ*. In essence, she sees it as a metaphor of *Ọyọ*'s artistic hegemony.

Lawal (1978), Henry and Drewal (1983:27), Adeoye (1978), Drewal and Drewal (1983: 134), Ibitokun (1993:32-34), Fagg and Pemberton (1982: 17) work on *Gẹlẹdẹ* and examines its relation to spirit children. The notion of spirit children in this case should not be associated with 'Abiku' (born to die) because the goal of *Gẹlẹdẹ* is 'Abiye' (born to live).

Adegbola (2007) examines the importance of *Gẹlẹdẹ* and concludes that the tradition "combines art and ritual dance to educate, amuse and inspire worship". He then upholds its usefulness to professional

communication as a means of information. He also views *Gèlèdè* from a gender perspective and submits that since women are very significant custodians and propagators of oral genres, and given their centrality in *Gèlèdè* tradition, the ritual and secular agendas contained in the *Gèlèdè* songs can be utilized for the education of the younger ones;

The present effort is an extension of Adegbola's study which examines the educational relevance of the tradition. For clarity, the evolution as phases of *Èfè* (ritual) and *Èfè* (the satire) and their place in the society is diagrammatically represented below:



Èfè refers to the primordial verbal satiric form which gave form to the ritualized variant as a memorabilia in honour of the first protege who adopted the already existing form in a ritual dance to solve a pressing social problems (see yemoja mythical account of origin), as a verbal form, *Èfè* conveniently accommodates the various subset as *Yèyè*, *Awada*, *Ifedasèfè* and *Eebu*. As a result of this relationship, a brief discussion of each of these subsets is germane at this point. This is very relevant here because all of these features prominently in the Yoruba satiric tradition.

Yeye

Yèyè is milder, its performance is not necessarily elaborate as *Èfè*. It takes place in impromptu settings. It can be seen as the equivalence of what Pierson describes as "Satiric songs (acts) of more personal gossip and recrimination, (which) were point of every day life" (177). It is not a periodic art and it takes place among any age grade. In *Yèyè*, actions and offences of minor importance provide occasion for satiric comments. It is a form of "slap stick farce" which is more relaxed when compared with *Èfè* in terms of seriousness. It is essentially used to ridicule somebody whose conducts are perceived to run counter to common sense or obvious wisdom. Such conducts do not necessarily have to portend danger to the interest or survival of the group. *Yèyè* like *Èfè*, can be verbal and non-verbal, it takes the form of comments couched in witticism, indirection, thinly masked invectives and exaggeration. The non-verbal aspects involves "face-making", funny gesture and postures and mimicry of the victims's known mannerism. *Yèyè* does not have any trapping of festivity. It is a diurnal show.

Awada

As indicated earlier, *Awada* or *Apara* is laughter-provoking among peers. The motive is to provide laughter during relaxation. In this regard, it lightens the spirit and promotes social ties and friendliness. It is a verbal exchange in which witty manipulations of linguistic resources are employed. Court jesters in Oba's palaces also employ this mode, sometimes not to criticize the Oba but to put him in good mood whenever occasion demands. In it, especially when employed among peers, light-hearted non-aggressive abuses (*eebu*) can be used.

Ifedasèfè

Ifedasèfè is a modern Yoruba coinage which refers to mockery derived from careful observation of human shortcoming both in terms of conducts and physical blemishes. If is employed where outright abuse is discouraged or considered dangerous. Its major tool is indirection. It features proverbs, anecdotes and witticisms. Also, the use of carved images as we have in the use of Etiyeri mock masks features in the *Ifedasèfè*. In modern times, cartoons play the role that *Ifedasèfè* plays in traditional communication. Note that this is not represented in the chart because of its relatively new coinage.

Eebu

Eebu functions within Yoruba social discourse especially in quarrel situations, as a form of verbal combat where the parties involved exchange hot aggressive and insulting words. Here, physical attributes

(blemishes) are mentioned to hurt the feelings of the individual involved in the eebu exchange. This at times degenerates into curses. On another plane, eebu functions as a tool for correction especially within the family set-up where parents morally chide their erring children. In this case, physical blemishes are not mentioned since children generally inherit most of the physical features from their parents. *Èfẹ̀* is seen in the light similar to the second role, which eebu performs above; but it does so, on a higher, formal and grander scale. The sense in which it is used here is what the Kétu and other practicing communities call “Oro-*Èfẹ̀*” (satiric words) during the *Èfẹ̀/Gèlèdè* festival.

In essence, in the eebu art, the emotion of hostility is openly displayed in the use of barbed words and expressions to hurt the other party. This hostility is repressed and tempered by the satirist’s recourse to humorous criticism of vices. This is why Joseph Addison (1711) reported by Kennedy and Combe (1988) offers that, “satire has smiles in her look, and a dagger under her garment” (6). It is this effort at masking satiric jibes under humorous acts that distinguishes it from invectives. The same line of demarcation exists between *Èfẹ̀* and eebu arts amongst the Yoruba.

Eebu (invective) in many instances, is motivated by private vendetta and is always heavily coloured by personal biases, but *èfẹ̀* (satire) deal with factual and verifiable occurrence. Satire is usually placed at the service of the entire community and humanity in general. It should be mentioned that our operational conception of *èfẹ̀* includes all these subsets which have diffused into the *Èfẹ̀* performance.

II. BETWEEN *Èfẹ̀* AND *èfẹ̀*

One of the distinctive features of these forms comes as a result of their collocative combinations. For example, *apara* collates with “*da-apara*, ‘se’ - *yèyẹ̀*, *awada* and *Èfẹ̀* while ‘*bu*’ collocates with – eebu. *Èfẹ̀* (the ritual), explains the magico-religious consciousness of the people that practice it as a festival. It evolved primarily to placate and venerate womanhood thereby ensuring the well being of the society. On the other hand, *Èfẹ̀* (the purely communicative) emphasizes the satiric aspect of its application in the ordinary Yoruba language use. There is *Èfẹ̀* as an institutional art form, there is also *èfẹ̀* in every discourse. The art form makes use of the everyday discourse form. Though the latter sense has its origin in the former sense, yet, in the modern Yoruba verbal communication, it is latter sense that has gained widest currency. The word, *Èfẹ̀* tends to have been so divested of its ritualism that just any unserious verbal exchange or even play on words now passes as *Èfẹ̀* in the modern Yoruba usage. Its semantic border has been expanded to include subset such as *Yèyẹ̀*, *Awada* and *Apara*. It must however be noted that *yeye*, *Awada*, *Eebu* and *Apara* which feature prominently in *Èfẹ̀* have no serious line of demarcation. Context of use plays significant role in their application. For example, what can be glossed over as *yèyẹ̀* or *awada* in certain context becomes eebu when used in another context. At times, these subsets of *Èfẹ̀* can be seen as synonyms for one another because of their serious overlaps. Contemporary Yoruba theatre practitioners like *kayode Olaiya (Aderupoko)*, *Ayo Ogunsina (Papilolo)*, *Moses Olaiya-Adejumo (Baba Sala)* and even late *Gbenga Adebayo* have exploited these genres in their satiric performances. This desacralization, noticed in *Èfẹ̀* (ritual) which of course is an evidence of cultural dynamism, is a universal trend noticed in other ritual festivals like *Egúngún*, *Orò*, *Şango*, *Ògun*, etc. In modern times, the festive aspect is increasingly being accentuated to progressive de-emphasizing of the ritual while the carnivalesque with the accompanying funfare is gaining prominence.

The present study tows *Olabimtan’s* line which explores the social relevance of the art as an instrument of publicity pronouncing social infractions and their agents with the ultimate aim of correcting and reforming the human community. Here, we adopt a dualist view of *Èfẹ̀* as protest and *Èfẹ̀* as a correctional traditional art form.

III. CONTENT ANALYSIS

As pointed out earlier, *Èfẹ̀*, just like any contemporary mass media is no respecter of class, status or officialdom. It tells it as it is. This belief stems from the Yoruba belief that *Oba kii mu onkorin*” (no king arrest a bard). Hence, *Èfẹ̀* can “say it as it is.” This view is graphically captured in the following rendition;

Mo d’awí konko lójú onile	<i>I am now the one-who-speaks-directly -to-a-man’s face</i>
Emi ti <i>ńsòrò</i> l’oju <i>òlórò</i>	<i>Me, who speak of a man directly to His face</i>
Mo d’awí konko l’oju onile	<i>I am now the one-who-speaks-directly</i>

Emi ti ñsòrò l'ooju olórò	<i>To-a-man's face</i>
	<i>Me, who speak of a man directly to</i>
	<i>His face</i>
Oṣoo'le kan ko gbodo pa mije	<i>No wizard dare kill me</i>
Fatona de Alakasu-ohun,	<i>No witch dare kill me</i>
Omo Olupeju, omo Alawo Ojumu	<i>Fatona is here, the-one-with-heavy-utterance</i>
	<i>The offspring of Olupeju, the offspring</i>
Fatona de Alakasu Ohun.	<i>Alawo Ojumu</i>
	<i>Fatona is here, the-one-with-heavy-utterance</i>

(Olabimtan; 1981: 158)

In this rendition, the poet establishes his uncommon courages to confront the evil doer and put him on the spot. This is an important character trait that a public crusader must possess. The phrase, "Awi Konko" clearly captures this. He also hints at the source of his power of immunity- 'oso' (sourcerer), and 'Ajé' witches. It is instructive to note here that the extra-natural powers are the patrons and matrons respectively of the Èfè cult. By extension, since the artist speaks for the people, his/her power derives from them.

Note the Èfè poetry in the careful deployment of lexical items in this piece: Awi-konko paints clearly the picture of confrontation, challenge and righteous audacity. It is like saying one that is able to hit the nail on the head. Note also the use of "Alakasu Ohun" (the one with heavy utterances). 'Alakasu' depicts size and weight. Hence 'Alákàsù ohùn (heavy utterances) metaphorically captures that which one that is not specially enabled cannot utter. This ability to say it to the face of the concern is central to the Yoruba belief that "aja kii gbo, k'enu e o faya" (the dog's mouth is not torn as a result of barking.)

In another satiric jibe, Èfè pokes corrective fun at the expense of avaricious wives in the following episode:

Èwí fókò mi ko fun mi lówó	<i>Tell my husband</i>
Ngó ra leesi pèlu ginni	<i>I will buy lace and guinea (clothes)</i>
To ba maa wemo ngó gbàró aso kan (2ce)	<i>If he wants to wean the child, I will</i>
	<i>Take a wrapper (cloth)(2ce)</i>
Boo mu wa kii sòran yàn	<i>If you don't bring it, it is not by force</i>
Bi o fun mi lásò, emi na ò nì bìmò	<i>If you don't give me the cloth, I too</i>
	<i>Will not give birth</i>
Bo o mu wa kii sòran yàn...	<i>If you don't bring it, it is not by force</i>

(Joga, Dec., 2006)

Èfè does not believe in indirection. Names of culprits are mentioned especially those that are guilty of serious moral infraction. The excerpt below, clearly demonstrates this:

Aafa Akeem ñkò	<i>what of Alfa Akeem</i>
Ọmọ Alòkolódò	<i>Son of Alokolodo</i>
Mó rò pé àdúà Pàtàkì lèńṣe	<i>I hope it is special prayer that you</i>
	<i>Are offering</i>
Le fi ñse meet in the corner?	<i>That you are meeting at the corner?</i>
Ah ah!	<i>Ah ah!</i>
Sé bí wón pé	<i>Is it not said that</i>
Àwọn Alaafa èṣṣà mójútó	<i>the Alfas do not do inspection?</i>
Èyin lẹ̀ sì ñse wáà sí	<i>and it is you that preaches</i>
Pé kí tíńjé tí n jé	<i>that this, that those...</i>
Ọgá Ilu ọmọ Ọróbiyí	<i>Oga ilu, son of orobiyi</i>
Kíle a ti se ṣeyí ki yàgàdà ó tó wagada	<i>How did you do it before things turn</i>
	<i>Turpsy turvy</i>
Bí yi kúkúru òbá gbón	<i>if the short one is foolish</i>
Kíló ṣeyí gíga	<i>what happened to the tall one.</i>
Audience: Èfè máà fè o	<i>Efe keep talking</i>
Ajá i gbó káyín è yo	<i>A dog does not loose its teeth for</i>
	<i>barking</i>

<i>Ẹfẹ</i> máà fẹ o	<i>Efe</i> keep talking
<i>Ẹfẹ</i> : En, óyẹ kí Taofiki pé ójẹ o dijómii	it is expected for taofik to say it should
Nígba ójé pé	be suspended till another day
Owó Alárinà yíí Aafa Akimu ńgbà	since the middleman's fee that Akeem has been collecting
Óńfún Taofiki ní díẹ díẹ ńbẹ	He gives Taofik part of it
Nàà ló sep pé ejẹ o dijó mi	That is why he wants it suspended

Here *Ẹfẹ* satirically lampoons religious hypocrisy and adultery. Alfa Akeem, Oga Ilu, and Taofik are exposed as evil triumvirates in an adulterous episode in the community. The same is noticed in:

Olu Aya Adegbite ńkó?	What of Olu, Adegbite's wife?
Sé torípé Alaaji Agbówórin ò sínílé	is it because the rich Alhaji is not at home
Le bá sọ lé Mr. Adegbite di hoteli?	You then turned Mr. Adegbite's House into an hotel
Ngò tètè gbòrò nàà	I did not hear about it on time
Şé èmi òkúkú ńseré lọ	Since I don't normally go to
Ìsàlẹ̀ Èkó	Isale Eko
Wọ́n ní ngò rọ̀yìn fọ́ba bí mo délé ọba	I t said; I will tell then king when I Get home
Sebí Dayo ńgbó, Alaso pupa	I assume Dayo is listening- the red Clothed one
Ońje yán ọńjẹko	You eat (our) pounded yam you eat (our) pap
Otun n da mi	and you are back stabbing me
Òtító la jẹ Ẹgbádò	it is true we are Egbados
Àwà ò ti ẹ̀ gò (2ce)	we are not stupid (2ce)
Ẹyin Ọhọ́rí isẹ̀ yín làńrí un	you the Ohoris that is your Behaviour we are seeing
Òtító la jẹ Ẹgbádò sọ o fẹ máa rẹ wa je ni?	It is true we are egbados do you want to be cheating us?

Also *Ẹfẹ* as keeper of public morality also shows in:

Ẹyin ará ibí	You these people
Ẹraye aberanje?	Don't you see the world?
óḍókó ọkọ tán ó bojújẹ	She frowned after a sex with the husband
Tó bá ti dó talẹ tán	When she had with the concubine
Àkàtíkè	She powdered the her face
Onísekẹ́su ewò díẹ̀ pẹ̀lẹ̀ bẹ	The promiscuous one with flat buttocks
Onísekẹ́su ewò díẹ̀ pẹ̀lẹ̀ bẹ	God will surely judge
Ìwò ló máa ń hùwà kí wà	What no human can judge
Ìwò ló máa ń hùwà kí wà	The wife keeps misbehaving

Abuse, Satire

(Ibara, October, 2006)

In this excerpt, *Ẹfẹ* combines Yeye and eebu to satirise the adulterous escapades of the women in question. She habitually warms up to the concubines while grudgingly carries out her conjugal duties to the husband.

Jagunmolu omo Alókolódò	Jagunmolu, son of Alokolodo
Kiní nàà mà búyẹ̀kẹ̀tẹ̀ ẹ!	The matter is quite fantastic
Aà sì le tí torí pè	Do we say because our father is a chief

Enìkan tún jolóyè	<i>we should do whatever we like?</i>
Bí ti yín	<i>why don't you remember that</i>
Kinni naa naa ku pedee	<i>someone else's is a chief like yours</i>
Wón mí	<i>the issue is not too good.</i>
Kó dó mi lóko	<i>it is said</i>
Kó dó mi nílé	<i>to be sexed in the farm</i>
Serifatu nísàlè Alaigboran	<i>to be sexed in the house</i>
Ólòkò mējo po laarin odun kan	<i>Serifatu at the obstinate's quater</i>
Ìwà ìbàjè wònyí mà bù áyà	<i>He acquired eight husbands in a year</i>
Ewí fún Sariyu kóun má	<i>these misdeeds are too grievous</i>
Kúkú àimòdí	<i>Tell Sariyu let her not die an</i>
	<i>Unaccountable death</i>
	<i>These misdeeds are not good.</i>
	(Joga, Dec., 2006)

Just like any social crusader, the messages of Èfè are credible and veritable. This derive from the fact that Èfè is imbued with a supernatural ubiquity – he is all seeing: this, indeed is achieved through the collective effort of members of the community that surreptitiously report all infractions to the Èfè group who can in turn broadcast such to the entire community for whom Èfè serves as the mouth-piece. The quaintessence “awí konko lójú Olòrò (the one who speaks directly to a man's face). In this connection, actual names of the offenders are mentioned with the details of infraction committed. The following is a graphical demonstration of such factuality:

Èkú Àseye	<i>Greetings on this fitting celebration</i>
Adúpè lódò Olòrun (2ce)	<i>we give thanks to God</i>
Gbogbo àwọn isèse ilé Adelé	<i>we give thanks to God</i>
Ile awe	<i>All the ancestors of Adele's</i>
	<i>compound</i>
Adúpè pé wòn bawa ya	<i>Awe's compound</i>
Ìgbàdò hè	<i>We give thanks that they helped us</i>
	<i>pluck</i>
Wòn fi dí òtá lenu	<i>the maize of spite</i>
Wòn gbà pé Seidu	<i>They plugged the enemy's mouth</i>
Adide ile Adele	<i>They agreed that Seidu Adide</i>
Òògùn lónise kiri	<i>of Adede's compound</i>
Ki won má joba	<i>Has been employing black magic</i>
Nílè yí mò	<i>So that a king will not be enthroned</i>
Kóle joun ni ó máa kònròlù	<i>In this land again</i>
Lú kiri	<i>So that he will be the one controlling</i>
	<i>this town about</i>
Sùgbòn Òrúnmilà ni o	<i>but Orunmila saw it</i>
Olòrun rí òkàn kálùkù	<i>God saw everybody's mind</i>
Ati dúpè lódò Olòrun	<i>We thank God</i>
Pé orùú oyege	<i>that you bore it successfully</i>
Oóní kábàámò o	<i>May you never have regrets</i>

In this piece, Èfè exposes the surreptitious machinations of Seidu to prevent the appointment of a substantive Oba for Joga community. Since he was the one acting in that capacity, he was doing everything to enlongate his tenure so as to continue to enjoy the benefits attached to it. This is an extreme act of selfishness which is not in the interest of the entire community.

A similar case in point here is contained in the following:

Ohun tó o se	<i>What you have done</i>
Ayé ti gbo na	<i>The world has heard</i>
Rafatu Ayinke	<i>Rafatu Ayinke</i>

Má sè míni
Owó tóo gbé yen
Owó ijọ wa ni (2ce)

Don't repeat such
The money you stole
Belongs to our congregation (2ce)
(Joga, Dec., 2006)

Ẹfẹ does not only criticise or protest misconducts, it points way out of the social malaise by making suggestions. In the following rendition, *Ẹfẹ* tries to use his art to settle the Obaship tussle between two claimants to the throne of Olu of Ilaro in 1967.

Bóbá jẹ́ bẹ́ẹ́ ni í bá mà da
Ká móyè f' Adekunle o
Edudu Oba Ibese
Ikú ẹ́ ló pa Otenkan
Ìyẹn ò tó mú ọ̀gbọ̀n dan?
E n yanko firifiri

*if that is what it will turn to
let's give the chieftancy title to Adekunle
Competition for the royal title in Ibese
was the cause of Otenkan's death
Isn't that a sufficient lesson?
you continue to send delegation upon
delegation.*

(Olabintan, 1981: 161)

The foregoing discussion has shown that Efe satiric art is a very potent instrument to maintain the moral, sociologiccal and political sanity of the society. It is a Yoruba traditional art which can be exploited to heal our contemporary society of its myriad ills of corruption, misrule abuse of power and related vices that have for long bogged us down. As an art imbued with very rich spectacle and verbal resources, its poetry, songs, dances and other related dramaturgical resources are potent mass media tools to mobilize people in the process of condemnation and protestation that presently plague us as a people.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adegbola, A. (2007). "The Importance of Gelede in Yoruba Culture". Paper presented at "Colloque International Sur Le Patrimoine Oral et Immateral et al Tradition Orale Gelede". Benin Republic, 11-13 December, 2007.
- [2] Adesanya, A. (1997). "Gelede: A Metaphor of Oyo Artistic Hegemony" in ELA Journal of African Studies, Nos. 1 & 2.
- [3] Adesina, A. E. (2007). "The Importance of Gelede in Yoruba Culture", Paper presented at "Colloques international sur le Patrimoine Oral et Immateral et la Tradition Orale Gelede", Benin Republic, 11-13 December, 2007.
- [4] Babatunde, E.D. (1988), "Ketu Myth and the Status of Woman: A structural Interpretation of Some Yoruba Myths" in African Notes: Journal of Institute of African Studies vol. XII, nos. 1 and 2.
- [5] Beier, Ulli (1965) Yoruba Theatre: Introduction to African Literature, Ibadan: University Press
- [6] Bernolles, J. (1973), " Note Sur les Masques de la Society Guelede de Save (Dahomey Central)". Etute Dahomeennes, n.s. 23-35
- [7] Drewal, H.J (1974) "Efe: Voiced Power and Pageantry." Africa Arts 7 (4): 8-19, 62-63, 95-96.
- [8] Drewal, M.T. and Drewal, H.J. (1975). "Gelede Dance of the Western Yoruba." African Arts 8(2) 36-45, 78-79.
- [9] Harper, P. (1971). "The Role of Dance in the Gelede Ceremonies of the Village of the Village of Ijio", Odu: A journal West African Studies, pp. 67-94.
- [10] Ibitokun, B.M. (1993). "Dance as Ritual Drama and Entertainment in the Gelede of Ketu Yoruba Sub-group in West Africa". In A Study in Traditional African Feminism, Ile- Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Ltd.
- [11] Kerchache, J. (1973) Masques Yoruba, Afriques, Paris: Galerie Jacques Kerchache.
- [12] Lawal, B. (1996). The Gelede Spectacle: Art, Gender and Social Harmony in an African culture ,Washington: Univesity of Washington Press.
- [13] Obafemi, O. (1984). "Theatre of Farce: The Yeye Tradition in Moses Olaiya's Plays" in Odu: A journal of West African studies. No. 26, Ile Ife: University of Ife Press.
- [14] Olabintan, A. (1970). " An introduction of Efe Poems of the Egbado Yorua." A paper presented At the school of Oriental and African Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
- [15] Olabintan, A. (1972), "Gelede". Olokun, 10: 37-41.
- [16] Olaimtan, A. (1981), "the Efe/Gelede Poet of Egbado Ketu-Yoruba" in N.A. Uchegbular, A.Garuba, and R. Amadi-Tshwala, (eds.) Oral Poetry in Nigeria.
- [17] Oyedepo, S.O. (1979) "Gelede Songs". Unpublished B.A. Project, Linguistic Dept. University of Ibadan, Nigeria.