The Oral Thing and its Digital Double in Contemporary Tiv Society: The step Forward of Ashi Waves F.M Radio, Katsina-Ala, Nigeria.

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Abstract

The oral thing has long been the instrument of disseminating cultural codes, principles, practices, flora and fauna, and values and visions to members of the society for social, economic, linguistic, religious, and political development of the group. Oral artistic expressions, in their various categories like myths, legends, riddles, proverbs, folktales etc however, seem to be disappearing in the wake of urban, cross-cultural hybridism, industrial modes of production, and the encroachments of scientific and technological scales of reference. The closely-knit oral society of the group is gradually fading away, as learning has become less restricted to the authority of memory to transmit from elders to the young ones. There temporary seems to be a 'dead end' to oral arts and cultures. The vibrancy of the oral artistic expressions, however, has emerged and morphed into new patterns in the new media thereby creating verdant fields and platforms for interrogating the African oral art and making meaning in the contemporary computer-mediated society. The oral thing has gained a digital double (specify what this means) in its multi-mediated orality in the electronic studios as they help shape arts and culture in Africa. This paper examines the synergy of oral artistic productions and the new media in Tiv society by exploring the implications in the 'co-habitation', and the vistas and potentialities of this digital double. The paper posits that the digital double, as facilitated by Ashi Waves F.M Radio, Benue State, Nigeria, points to the future of the oral artistic product and its cultural reconstruction, as postcolonial societies continue to embrace technological innovations creating their own stories.

Key words: *The oral thing, digital double, the Tiv society, step forward, Ashi Waves Radio.*

Introduction

The oral thing, oral artistic creations and cultural transmissions expressed orally (Merolla 81), such oral artistic creations include folktales, lullabies, songs, proverbs, myths, tongue twisters, etc. The oral thing allows people especially of non-technology-reliant societies to navigate their worlds, act out or respond to their worlds and organize

their life and vision through the cognitive means of their oral media platforms. It refers to the oral artistic constructions created in the course of society's development to satisfy fundamental human curiosities and search for the way forward. The oral thing began with the expression of the word including thought processes. It is with words that the oral world was invented and articulated. The oral thing is a fundamental experience, important in its ways of constructing and interpreting the world, (See Harold Scheub 9, Christiane Seydoo 17 and Ruth Finnegan 3). Life and the totality of human experience are displayed using the oral thing especially before the advent of scientific scales of reference and the dominance of the digital media.

The oral art and action, narrated, enacted and transmitted in their oral forms are increasingly undergoing complex changes, adaptations and transformations in contemporary societies in Africa. These changes, adaptations and transformations are emerging from the increasingly complex nature of present-day societies with their cultural mix and hybridization, due to urbanization and globalization, as a result of the sustained importance and test-tube knowledge of science, and the scales of technology-mediated mechanical processing and reproduction of products, goods and services. The oral product has emerged as the invention and function of digital reproduction and as a determinant of the new character, new patterns of expression, new moments of performance, new frames of narrative, and a new form that weaves the old and new to postmodern tastes and values. Meanwhile, oral productions were deemed by some people today to have outlived its wholesome basis

This declining value accorded the oral thing due to modernization exists only in temporality as technology sooner moved and fused the oral thing to contemporary scales of value and relevance. Despite this, a number of scholars strongly believe in the relevance of the oral thing. Ngugi insists that "orature," another name for the oral thing in Africa, is the "great legacy of African life and languages… our common well" (Ngugi, *Globalectics: Theory and the politics of knowing* 126). Chinweizu states in affirmation that 'orature' is the "root from which modern African literature must draw sustenance" (Chinweizu et al, 21) and Irele emphasizes that oral literature is "the fundamental reference of discourse and of the imaginative mode in Africa" (11). With the emergence of globalization comes cross-cultural hybridism which merges inherited oral artistic productions with western ones. With innovations in the new media technology, the oral thing is nourished, thus dynamically transforming the setting, the oral moment, and recreating added set of choices of entertainment and education. The efforts of creative producers, oral and digital participants and technology workers, have helped the oral thing to score a digital double and carve out fresh "desires and identities" 'in all cases "with gains and losses" (Merolla 81), especially amongst the Tiv of Nigeria.

The Tiv are a people of North-central Nigeria with vigorous art forms like proverbs, myths, legends, riddles, satires, performances and rhetoric, many of which are yet to be fully researched on, even in this period when other scales of valuestake priority over traditional forms of existence. The younger generations in contemporary Tiv society are at the risk of not knowing the oral texts of their Tiv ethnic group, some of which are disappearing in the wake of limited cultural interactions and the subsuming postmodern new sensibilities. Ashi Waves, 99.9 F.M Radio, Katsina-Ala, Benue State of Nigeria is a radio station the establishment of which immediately provided

the media for the reinvigoration of Tiv art forms, thus facilitating previously remote forms of entertainment and education. With the creation of Ashi Waves F.M Radio also encouraged the creation of new audiences, breathe new life into texts and styles. This creation linked old and new generations of Tiv and eroded the terminal sense that hitherto permeated Tiv oral texts. Ashi Waves radio has thus taken Tiv oral art forms a step forward by creating a digital double of preservation and reproduction of the eroding art forms.

Tiv art forms are thus technically made interesting as they meet the contemporary needs of the teeming population overtaken by sudden and unprecedented economic, political, religious, and social changes. The step forward is also in the new consciousness created by providing a platform for recording, listening and producing folktales, riddles, children games, and proverbs as well as discussions on contemporary issues bothering present day people of the group, in relation to their oral artistic productions. With this the step forward, a new audience is carved; a fresh thematic thrust in line with current issues is connected, thereby enhancing critical thinking. Echoes of the interface between the oral, the written and technology create new timelines, styles, themes, techniques, aesthetics, and contextual discourses. In spite of the fact that the alignment between the oral art forms and new media technologies have crumbled the oral moment, immediate response, gestures, and facial expressions which Daniell Merolla see as 'gains and losses', it is worth stating that the oral thing has been revived in ways that would make them resilient. Historical contexts, fluidities in the modern cross-cultural intersections, changes in setting and multi-perspectives, creativity in technological medium may

reverse events, reframe contexts and re-evaluate texts to suit contemporary values, editing, gender, age, cultures, and situations. These fluidities also characterise the oral product. The oral thing has thus scored a digital double by its oral expression and its use in the electronic media, thus retaining the content, creating additional styles and aesthetic qualities, and facilitating the reinvigoration of what seems threatened.

Conceptualizing Contemporary Digital Double

The oral thing had been branded "a heritage from the past" (Finnegan, *The Oral and Beyond,* 179), seen to be restrictive and traditional in outlook, and envisaged as a collective communal product fixed to the past. They came under different names in the 1950s such as "tribal inheritance", "oral traditions", and "age-old myths by non-literate native speakers restricted by their traditional mind set" (Finnegan *The Oral and Beyond,* 180). By the 1960s and 1970s, writers like Dorson began to delineate these folk traditions, tribal inheritances and traditional culture in their inclusion in modern activities, in Dorson's words, as 'hidden under and penetrating into modern ways' (Dorson 17, 67). 'Tribal inheritances' thus have shown their vitality and surviving strength.

Finnegan (180) states in 2007, on the flexible nature of the oral thing that:

> Today there are still traces of this perspective. But overall the field looks very different. Oral texts are no longer automatically assumed to belong to the past with deep roots in traditional culture, fit objects to be scripturalised into written text. Scholars now look for their examples to young people as well as the old, to the educated not just the non-literate, to towns as well as countryside, to industrial workers and broadcast performers, and to

disruptive or innovative forms not just the old guard-change and contemporaneity are now part of the picture.

The oral thing is diversified from its local conceptualization and from its earlier debate on the status of orality and literacy in what had been called the 'great divide' theory (Finnegan "Literacy Versus Non-Literacy. The Great Divide?" 112). The oral thing, since the 1980s, has undergone changes in the new media, and the 'African paradox' of the 'eroded orality' against the higher cognitive capacity of literacy is laid to rest. In its place, there is a shift to "effects of interaction between orality, literacy and new electronic media" and to "the interconnectedness of a broad range of African verbal genres and modalities of production rather than the separation of the two closed worlds" (Merolla 83). This has resulted to the conceptual reconstruction of a multifarious field of study. The new media has infiltrated not just narrative and performance arenas but also the private homes. Work places, political gatherings and socio-economic spheres are also covered, recorded and interpreted such that there no longer seems to be a 'cultural loss' even as there are 'gains and losses.' The influence of the new media to the oral categoriesas already stated, has created obstacles, the death of live interchange between the performer and the audience, the problem of active participation and collective performance, instances of spontaneous positive or negative response, the disengagement of one oral category to its diffusion to a modern form, and the emerging confusion between the 'authentic' oral category and the modern, mostly hybridized new media version. Diawara discussing "the Mande oral popular culture revisited by the electronic media" sees the new media trend as an "erosion of orality" and as "mutual zombification" (Diawara 40-8). Schults sees this 'politics' as the demise of live interaction

which is capable of separating the performer and the audience (443). He also examines the 'problem' of message in the 'logic of narrative variants' and Mbembe opines that the decline in the presence of oral art categories is connected to the diffusion and processes of production of the new media (Mbembe 151-63).

The fact of a threatening erosion of the oral product makes preference for a hybridized one, which in time may be created by members of the Tiv group using the new media platforms. The Tiv group, for instance, now recreates oral narratives, songs and other products to suit their contemporary needs and challenges. There are oral artistic products where the original creators are no longer alive but the product was not transferred to other members of the group; there are other oral products the 'modern' members of the group thought as heathen, un-religious, and unacceptable until the holders of the product pass on to the great beyond without any member learning it. The new media platforms now attempt to gain the product back by getting people to perform for documentation. The digital double becomes assured at least to keep track of the new character of the oral thing. The Ashi Waves electronic media has taken a bold step in revitalizing oral artistic products threatened to extinction.

The oral thing in Africa has assumed several terminologies to wrestle itself from the risk of downsizing, branding and inferiority allegations from the Euro-American divide. The earlier name preferred by Africans was 'orature.' In time, other names emerged to satisfy the allegations generated and capture the divide debate through naming, a naming which attempts to explain the contestations thereof. Such names include "auriture" (Coplan 8), "auditory arts" (Peek 474), "oral aural" (Kishani 27) "cyberorature" (Ngugi

85), "Orature" (Rosenberg 75), "literary orature" (Swanepoel 1210) and "technauriture" (Kaschulla and Mostert 40). These terms came with the unending search for knowledge as well as court controversies in respect of the intricate aspects of such terms. For instance, the term "auriture" generates the voice but 'amplifies' it with hearing. David Coplan (8-9) shows auriture's emphasis thus:

> auritures places the emphasis on the ears of the hearers, who include both performer and audience, and hence properly, on the intended and experienced aesthetic transaction between all participants in a performance event.

Technauriture engages with the interplay between the oral, the written and technology, situating it "within a postmodern milieu that has . . . historically undervalued the spoken word" (Kaschula and Mostert 5). DaniellaMerolla opines that the term 'technauriture' "offers the opportunity to bridge the arguments pivoting on loss and innovation in previous debates" (Merolla 85). Oral artistic productions therefore are presently hybridized to written and technological scales that are complementary.

The oral thing and its digital double have been explored in African societies since the 1990s. The digital double refers to the deployment of oral contents in the production and preservation of oral art forms in the digital media. The digital media with its technical know-how comes to create additional aesthetic, thematic and stylistic qualities to the existing oral product. Apart from the qualities inherent in the oral artistic forms, the new media has added gust and technicality making the combination a digital double. The oral product has been projected as the basis for human thinking and the media of the radio, with its speech broadcast and technical acumen, has affirming this argument by Irele

and others. Through the techniques of parody, pastiche and collage, the oral thing reinvigorates itself in the electronic media and experiment with form, style, content and even functions.

Among the Tiv of North-central Nigeria, the musical artists, Zule-zoo, Bravo D and Zanga Zanga of Africa have parodied Tiv myths, legends, riddles, proverbs, and the kwagh-hir puppet performance to modern taste (Ikyer 11). Among the Hausa of Northern Nigeria, an artist, Rabilu Musa alias Dan Ibro has repackaged a blind beggar's song in his song "Bani Bayanin Naira" to create a new form and style. Adam S. Zango, in his song eulogizing the Emir of Zazzau and the Emir of Kano has reframed the form, content and style of Hausa classical court singers of Tabshe tradition to produce a new version of court singing. Liman states that this "new genre of Tabshe produced by modern popular Hausa singers is produced in the studio with the aid of electronic gadgets like the piano, synthesizers and computers" (Liman 6).

In the South Western zone of Nigeria, the Yoruba are in the forefront in turning the oral genres into digital double. Akeem Lasisi and his performance group, the singers are fusing the oral genres of poetry, music, performance, and culture. Femi Lasode has 'directed a visual version of the Sango mythology,' 'Saworoide,' a Yoruba oral narrative of the ancient Labode village, a narrative to which TundeKelani has created a new version, this time, not set in the village but in an urban environment, not in Ibadan but in Osun State. 'Araromire' a film version of a Yoruba folktale has undergone changes of script, creativity and automation. (Liman 7-8).

This widening vision has enabled scholars, performers and the audience to accept "far-flung forms and trends" (Finnegan, *The Oral*

and Beyond 182) beyond the group, the country, the region and the continent as the world moves to globalization status. This has created a new look and character to the oral thing in its digital double to which they are favourably held and not now taken as non-indigenous or 'imported.' To this direction, Kaschula records the Xhosa poet converting his panegyric thing to praise the Christian God and no longer his chief (Kaschula, 431); Colleyn records 'Snow White Show,' a public display produced by Bavarian sisters with a mix of "Lomongo songs, tunes from German folklore," and using "Tyrolean costumes, and the young Zairian girls" sense of acting (Colleyn, 127 quoted in Finnegan, *The Oral and Beyond* 182); Gunner records Zulu radio drama (Gunner, 223), and of Cote d'Ivoire's modification of the gate-gate a "contest of conventional insults" transformed from a contest to a game on the internet. It is fascinating to know that both the oral contest and the digital double of a game coexist. (Merolla 86). Finnegan (*The Oral and Beyond* 182) states that "all these nowadays seem as appropriate for study as the poetry and stories documented by the nineteenth and early twentieth century scholars." The interactions transcend previous bounds and levels from politics, youth culture, authorship, audience reach, version recreation, and commoditization. The concerns of contemporary life are contextualized into the oral thing and its digital double. This study is an attempt by researchers and cultural consultants to keep track of the developments arising from the use of oral materials in the media, evaluates the new dimensions oral artistic products are assuming in view of the technological advancements and how audiences are changing and responding to these developments and scales of value.

The Oral Data

The oral thing(expression) may extend to towns and cities across the length and breadth of Tivland, as they live their lives in traditional society. The data for this work was sourced from materials produced on Ashi Waves Radio and from cultural performances and expressions across the geography of Tivland and Nigeria. The modern desire for economic gains in all forms of communication made it difficult for the researcher to obtain vital information on narrative performances, songs, proverbs, lullabies, and myths. These are imbued with vital oral records, values and vision of the Tiv society. Sieving the data collected to obtain the right information, especially when an oral consultant told tales unrelated to the issue under discussion. The usual knotty issues of finance and time also threaten the progress of the research. The variation between tonal speech patterns of the Tiv and stress patterns of English make translation of words and expressions difficult. The researcher will use the indirect translation method so as to state the equivalent as known in Tiv.

Ashi Waves Radio and the Digital Double

Ashi Waves F.M Radio 99.9 Katsina-Ala has emerged as a key medium in transmitting the oral thing obviously disappearing from the memory of contemporary Tiv youths. The radio station has also re-invested the oral genres to relational contemporary experiences. It recreates the social base that captures the various institutions, values and visions of the society, and regenerates hybrid or emergent genres or surrogate ones to "give spatial resonance to human speech" (Irele 76). The station has broadened the expressive power of the artistic products beyond their earlier limited audience. Such re-created oral art forms include ballads, fairy tales, folktales, dirges, praise songs, jokes, satires, folk songs, riddles, superstitions, legends, myths, proverbs. The oral thing is transmitted on Ashi

Waves F.M Radio under the name *Imongo Teman* (sitting together), a new caption for expressing the wave of stylization and new outlook in contemporary Tiv society and of providing a distinct cultural voice to Tiv expressive art and assertions. The Tiv emphasizes 'sitting together' as a necessary exercise in building mutual trust, creating continuity, and ensuring the realization of goals and vision. Thus the 'old order of being' has engaged "a new mode of existence in 'expressive medium and of their means of address" (Irele 78).

The opening glee to command attention from the audience is the Tiv anthem, an anthem which many modern Tiv got to know of courtesy of its being aired by Ashi Waves radio. The Tiv ethnic anthem reverberates beyond the Katsina-Ala based radio station to airwaves that penetrate very many homes of the Tiv. The Tiv anthem is broadcast in its voice version and in its instrumental version, thus showing both the oral based version and the digital instrumental version. These plays of the oral anthem and or replay of the instrumental version create apt attention and introduce a wave of attention and respect for what oral artistic product to come as a programme. Very many Tiv speakers at home and at work get set for the needed attention for the enthusiastic radio broadcasters to launch into the Tiv expressive art and culture. There is the Tiv evening session which runs for one and a half hour (10-11.30 am) commanding attention by the use of the voice version and the modern technology-created instrumental version of the Tiv anthem. The anthem runs thus:

Yi ooooo!

Wao!
Agebagebavakaa
Wonderful things happen
Iwer I kaa
Sounds permeate the space
On mbaTiv cii
Prominent Tiv Sons, all
Wuhaduweshatembe
Dress elegantly on the space
Yoikyuriorihembeayemve!
And other tribes scatter in wonder
Beghaandeshaihyandeve!
The Lion swiftly emerged on the turf
Inyareghki bough kikume
Evil money thunders
Erkawulayo
Like rain
Ndyaryough-yi-yough
Walk gaily
Wan beghayisaihongo
The Young Lion dominates the space
Nomso or duweshatembe
The Young one emerged to the space
Yoikyuriorihembeayem
And other tribes scatter

The anthem talks about "evil money thunders like rain." The Ashi Waves radio creates a complementary version of studio-made sound of thunder onomatopoeic to the world 'thunder' which is uttered in the lines of the anthem thereby creating a sound effect relevant to the understanding of the message. This generates a unity of sound and message in a calculated effect of revitalizing the anthem, expanding through complementary reconstruction, the shared oral product in the broadcast media for a mass populace of Tiv speakers and listeners, and generating greater interest in the radio version.

The Tiv oral poetry is revitalized by Ashi Waves radio. The songs transmitted on the radio cover all aspects of Tiv experience from the core traditional songs related in pre-and post-independence Nigeria, the epoch leading

to independence and after, the period of military interventions and dictatorship and the civilian take-over of government of Nigeria, to the present contemporary postmodern concerns and values. The songs these performers sang are timeless and thus covered not only their period but beyond to time present. The songs include concerns such as praise of personalities and worthy deeds, recreation of traditional methods, processes and values, dirges and elegies, political and military experiences and personalities, agriculture, politics, war, land disputes, satires on ills of society, developments, change and continuity in the hybridization of traditional and modern values, old and new sensibilities in values, modes of thought, behavior and vision of society, and the policies of government and their effects on people. Thus, activities of daily life and living which provide experiences of joy, sorrows, entertainments, instructions, and wisdoms of society are shared in Tiv oral poetry. Tiv poets spanning traditional and modern spaces are covered by Ashi Waves F.M radio in their daily broadcasts of Tiv service 'Imongo Teman'. Such poets include Anche, Maza Nomhwange, Jiagwer, Ginde, Akacha group dance and Akile Bende in the tradition bound *acam Ibiam*, the most traditional and core Tiv songs. Poets in the pre-and post-independence or second generation period include: Augustine Shima, Tarker No. 1 Golozo, Pevikyaa Zegi, Obadiah Kehemen Orkor (traditional and modern), Iyoughur Ute, Gari kwaghbo, Akile Bende, Ajo Agoo, Faga Jinge, Tondo Kumbur, Agugu Igbakumbur, and kwagtamen Akule, among others; the swange poets include Orshior Adakever, Yamuel Yashi, Atule Hon, Mbatyerevde Michael; there is also Chwada Apav of the Kucha Dance and the six Boys Band of the most modern variant of Swange called Baka. The less popular social groups include Ageebee Gborikyegh (The ambush band)-a lone

drummer-singer, Agbile Guma, Adagher (Tamburuma group). These performers are remembered and cherished because Ashi Waves gave them a platform.

The earlier poets invested their energies in distilling the general situations of society and the specific events of traditional experiences and consolidated them into poetry in order for it to become a body of knowledge, society's voice and conscience deployed for social re-engineering. The second generation poets though traditional, treat topics beyond the tradition to issues and developments confronting the Tiv nation such as land disputes, inter-intra-tribal wars, praise of personalities, attacks on social vices, attacks on bad politicians, political opponents and the practice of politics in Tiv land, the Tiv Riots of 1964 called *Atem Ityough*, attack on institutions like the police or military (when they confront their patron or the Tiv race), the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), the collapse of the civilian regimes, the military and their activities in governance of Nigeria, agricultural methods and better practices, and cultural concepts and practices which need reviewing for the reconstruction of society. The social-sensitive poets strive to entertain, instruct and chronicle cultural events, values and visions. We now have Christian poets who incorporate everyday happenings into their art and subject their art to moralizing purposes. All these groups of poets and their activities are recreated in the digital double of Ashi Waves F.M radio, Katsina-Ala.

Earlier Tiv poets like Anche, Bam Ginde and Akile Bende poetically keep track of events, experiences and personalities, as well as Tiv traditional patterns of existence. They therefore do not necessarily aspire to wealthy patrons to dictate the oral thing in their performance. They may praise virtues and heroes of society but do not lose track of the

'collective consciousness,' cultural identity, and the 'impregnable shell' of group values and visions even if such views may go against authority, personalities or group(s) (Hagher 12). To this end, according to Ker (23) art is used in "service of social, economic and political reconstruction of society."

The social group of poets talk about agricultural processes, land disputes, social ills, military interventions and dictatorships, as well as civilian governance and expectations, and so many other social, economic, political, religious and cultural issues. The poets include: No. 1 Golozo, Iyoughul Ute, Ajo Agoo, YamuelYashi, Gari kwaghbo, Tondo kumbur amongst others. The poems of the social oriented group of poets, who are more satiric and informative of cultural values, include King one Abua, Atule Hon, YanmuelYashi and others.

Considering the appreciation of work done by Ashi Waves radio in reviving the oral products, the digital double embodies a recreation of oral artistic history and media history of the oral artistic materials. For instance, Anche, Bam Ginde and Akile Bende would talk about strict adherence to culture and great personalities in culture; Augustine Tarker. No. 1 Golozo, Iyoughul Ute, Obadiah KehemenOrkor, PevikyaaZegi, FagaJinge, AjoAgoo, GariKwaghboand others dwell on the pains, gains and stages of development or stunted growth of the Tiv society and Nigeria in the wake of pre and postcolonial experiences, in issues like land disputes, fertilizer distribution, fuel scarcity, lack of love and peace. Subject-specific poets also exist in poets like Gari kwaghbo who sang on the issue of strained creditor and debtor relationship and the effects not paying up debts could pose to serial emotional conflagrations to him and others. There is also poets like Ajo Agoo and Faga Jinge whose

subject is on their strained relationship with their wives and the concomitant effects thereof. These songs would have been lost had the radio station not rescued them from performance on the airwaves.

Within this second generation of Tiv poets has emerged one, Obadia Kehemen Orkor, from the tradition-focused secular stand to a modern Christian religion thematic thrust of poetry. Obadiah has not only came first in being the first traditional poet to turn to the singing of purely Christian songs trying to win souls for Christ but has also abandoned his non-Christian songs in view of his full encounter with Christ. He has influenced many Tiv followers to his new-found love. Obadiah has also made history by being the first Tiv traditional singer to engage the use of the video format in dramatic performance of his songs. His songs are studio anchored a new development which has ignored and devoured the live performances and the attendant live responses. This means the first source of his songs are the video cassettes coming out of studio releases and not ones unedited from live performances as it was the case in the past. Also in Obadiah-like fashion, the Baka Band and the six Boy's Band which were purely social, erotic, free for all songs, music and dance now parody Christian Evangelical group songs and have abandoned their erotic styles and themes. Also, another Evangelical music and dance group called *New Jerusalem* have combined the Tiv traditional and modern instruments to mime and parody popular Pentecostal praise songs in their live performances and studio-centred releases of DVD and CD cassettes. The efforts of the *New Jerusalem Music and Dance Group* have changed the character and conception of secular music and the Christian religion. In their efforts too is envisaged a thin boundary between the secularization of religion and the religionization of secular

experience. The Christian God may now have followers who are strict adherents to traditional religion including those whose grudge is with the rejection of their artistic musical instruments and styles as well as those who are in the Christian religion yet admire the traditional ways of doing things. These are some examples of the digital double facilitated by Ashi Waves F.M, Katsina-Ala. All such poetry is duly represented in the Tiv session broadcasts of Ashi Waves radio to capture all segments of experience in society. The broadcasts have also helped researchers who may find it difficult in locating the oral products or their producers.

Ashi Waves F.M Radio is by each passing day engaged in the mention and analysis of the bibliography of Tiv proverbs and proverb collections. These, according to Archer Tylor, (15) include:

> The assemblage of new materials and the availability of old sources; the origin, history, influence, and value of collections; the history of individual proverbs with the interpretation and the evaluation of their changing forms; the rise and use of proverbial types and formulae including proverbial phrases, wellerisms, proverbial comparisons, the translation of proverbs from one language into another literary conventions in the use of proverbs….

The English word, proverb, also called *paroimia*, in Greek, is borrowed from old French who also parodied from the Latin word *proverbium* and suggest a public word uttered. (Champion xvi). Ashi Waves thus offers a loud and widespread utter of Tiv proverbs in their daily broadcast as permutations of the digital double of the spoken and the media mediated broadcast combination. In Tiv, a proverb is called *injakwagh* (saying with

deeper meaning) and its plural is *anzaakaa* (proverbs).

These Tiv proverbs reveal the intense modicum of modernity that infiltrates culture to generate a multi-modal approach to assessing traditional products:

> *Kaishwa yam i meemmyeinya ye*
> It's my beniseed that lure me to eating sand
> *Vuuvuuhingir gaga wulave*
> It is drizzles that develop into a downpour
> *Ka ape kaazerigyo la i vughur ye*
> It is where a pig is tethered that it roots.
> *Nyinyateleghjimeveuumalevehende ye*
> The horse beckons by lowering its back before humans began to climb
> *Kokombo per shajime nor*
> The butterfly has crossed the river on the back of the hippopotamus
> *Kigaveaankporyogudaankpor*
> Between emptiness and some flour, it's better to have some flour
> *Kamgbe u alevkaiza a ikyese ye*
> It is for the huge yield of beans that a big basket is brought to the farm.
> *Ka we ahiashashie u agina a chovur we ishigh*
> When you grow up during the time of small pox, it tells on your face.

The last proverb shows that the dictates of time determine the events thereof. The emergence of contemporary new media of technology inspires the re-emergence of the oral art forms pulled down by western civilization, globalization and urbanization.

In the Tiv narrative genre, too, Ashi Waves radio beckons to story tellers to revive their art and create a technological forum to harness oral art forms and develop new modes of social interaction. To most Tiv in urban centres, the digital double from Ashi Waves has become a defining moment for the

knowledge and advancement of this indigenous narrative culture and art. The program for Tiv folktales holds on every Saturday on Ashi Waves radio starting 7-8 pm. Thus, the demise of oral narrative, called *kwaghalom*is reversed by the digital double narrative offered by Ashi Waves; the digital double according to Kaschula and Mostert amounts to creating a cultural identity and mobilization of the innate potential of orality and oral traditions to support cultural identity (Kaschula and Mostert6).

Ashi Waves 99.9 F.M radio, Katsina-Ala calls this forum *ImongoTeman*or *Tem Imongo* (sitting together) to suggest a collaborative interaction, identity creation, documentation of oral genres a step further, and perhaps the processes for author's rights and shared authorship. In the *ImongoTeman* advertisement on radio, both the *kwaghalom* (folktales) genre and the radio station itself are advertised urging listeners to be attentive to the *kwaghalom* and the radio station.

The folktales do not only entertain and teach moral lessons and values of life and that of the community but in the new media context are also related to contemporary social, economic, religious, and political experiences in society to draw out their modern day allegories and point the way to bleeps of awakening growth necessary in society.

A folktale "*er I erverilum bakpen tseegh velunshanyaryo*" (why it is only the dead that have their portrait on money notes) attempts an explanation of social attitudes and proffer solutions against avarice, greed and selfishness in favour of loyalty, brotherly unity and the values of selflessness. It is a Tiv tale of three men, similar to the 14th century English medieval narrative of the three roisterers in '*The Pardoner's Tale*' by Geoffrey Chaucer, in which greed, ironic twist

of insincere vow and selfishness led the trio to their death via a bait of money not worked for.

Some of the Tiv folktales deal with 'how it happened' and how a thing or process comes to being. As the story tells 'how it happened,' the story teller caps it with a contextual reference to contemporary happening in social, economic religious and political spheres in Tiv, Nigeria or Africa at large. For instance the story "why it is wrong to give false allegations on a person" is explained, "why love and peace are superior," "why the frogs no longer stay in one place," "why leadership is no longer given but is now a process," "why the Tiv say 'even a child could unravel a mystery" "why the women have looked for a space but have not really gotten a definite one," "why the hare is a trickster, shrewd and stubborn," and "why it is not good to cause commotion and engage in defamation" are given contemporary referents for relevance. Though the digital double has eroded live collective performances, textual triumphs and some social functions, it has nonetheless produced a broadcast version with "style and content in new contexts" (Kaschula iv-v), added a new wave of consciousness, the possibility for an alternative cultural memory, a desire for change in the production, recording and consumption of oral genres, and the expansion of audiences and themes is created in the reality of broadcast performances of oral genres in Tiv. It is debatable whether the critical voice of the audience which sets the story teller on edge of verisimilitude or contextual direction of society can be replaced appropriately by the modified spaces of dialogue, editing and stylizations of the broadcast media. What is certain is that the time-structure radio narrative is sure to limit levels of reception and response of the work since performance elements such as dance, gestures scene depictions, music and voice modulation

influenced by the oral moment is inexistent. The digital double in Tiv story telling has however offered new possibilities of assessing, reviving, enjoying, moralizing, re-directing, and re-visioning the Tiv community in its oral performance genres. The digital double is "sweeping in all domains and practitioners and researchers are involved in creative and innovative ways to renew, perpetuate, understand, and enjoy oral genres" (Merolla, 88). The new media story tellers of Ashi Waves radio include broadcasters Fred Tertsea Hule, Gbakon Diogo, and Moses Amfii Amadu. Other invited story tellers from the local government areas of Tiv land include Tyo Agune, Timber Ugese, Mzuai Tserve, Najime Kor, Alam David, Tyozun Akune, Shuen Anongor, AlamMngohol, Gwakaa Amadu, Azakighir Erdoo, Terhemen Chiahemba Igba, Gabriel Kwaghchimin, Terdoo Labe, Godwin Shacia Aondohemba, Moses Orbeega Ian, Victor Terkighir Zer and Sarah Mwuese, to mention a few.

Elements of sound are employed by oral poets in teaching the young ones compares between alphabets and objects or animals beginning with that alphabet. The English alphabets from A-Z and the reverse of Z-A are recreated in sing-song for children. This way, pupils easily grasp the letter and the concept, object or person being represented. In a similar fashion, old-time indigenous arithmetic's and calculation taught to younger ones is recreated in Ashi Wave's radio. One of such popular calculation game and contest for children deserves mention here:

Amenamaoo too an ikyo la nam a!
Amenama take that dice and give me
Ngun u?
This one?
Oonnamase!
Yes, give it to me.
Amena ma oo too anikyo la nam a!

Amenama take that dice and give me
Ngu u?
This one?
Mvende ye!
No! Never!
Ngun u?
This one?
Oonnamase!
Yes, give it to me
Amena ma oo too anikyo la nam a!
Amenama take that dice and give me
Ngun u?
This one?
Mvende ye!
No! Never!
Ngu u?
This one?
Mvende ye!
No! Never!
Ngun u?
This one?
Mvende ye!
No! Never!
Ngun u?
This one?
Oonnamase!
Yes, give it to me.

Calculations, additions and subtractions are unraveled in the above song of the indigenous people. Urbanization, western tastes and values and globalization have marred such indigenous productions in play grounds, market fields and open spaces. The Ashi Waves Tiv session has not only revived these cultural forms of arts, science and technology but has moved it a step further with the new collection of its digital double from its former learners and enhanced an interactive participation for easy comprehension. With this digital double, it may not be surprising that these indigenous methods of arts, science and technology may soon appear on the internet, Facebook, Instagram and twitter, transformed like the *gate-gate* contest in Cote

d' Ivoire recorded by Jean Derive (10) to an age non-restrictive game, and like that *gate-gate*, not only performed in rural Tiv land but as well in urban centers, even performed by the Tiv in Diaspora. These forms of cultural indoctrination and heritage may even attract a commercial technologizing attractive to people beyond the Tiv group. The audience's response through phone calls and participation in the programmes relating to Tiv performances perhaps spur the station to be more active in their broadcasts.

Conclusion

The issue of oral art performances has now transcended indigenous mediums. The new media has gradually emerged to document, produce, preserve and disseminate the oral genres which, by urban and global trends, tend to extinction. The revival of such oral genres is facilitating the interaction between the local and global community. The oral poets and their art forms and performances are gradually being raised to mass production and consumption levels, popularized to commercial purposes, and doubly digitized in oral contexts of multimedia. It is increasingly doubtless that the oral thing is transformed and preserved in the digital media; a media which has became a crucial medium and provides a framework for authenticating orality and multi-disciplinary approach to oral products. Poets and performers are gradually building their online frontiers and narrowing the boundary between the traditional and the modern. Kaschula and Mostert (9) opine that oral art forms may continue to form the force of human interaction even as technology plays a prominent role in our lives; and technauriture has come as a vehicle for carrying both the primary and secondary 'aspects' of orality to 'engage with technological advances that can…overawe the original sentiments or messages.'

The oral thing has integrated to a digital double in the new media of Ashi Waves 99.9 F.M radio, making more advances, and creating the enabling environment for cross-fertilization of oral products. This transition from orality to writing and now to technology has undermined aspects of the oral thing but nevertheless has supported the oral thing to a new engagement with the postmodern youths deeply engrossed with cutting-edge technology. The youth who would never have encountered the oral products in view of their acquired modern tastes have now found the products in the media courtesy of Ashi Waves radio.

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