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HISTORY AND THE NECESSITY OF ADJUNCT DISCIPLINES IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

The term 'History' has remained an object of polemics. More often than any academic discipline, it has generated controversies regarding its nature – whether it belongs to the arts or science; or which methodology is most suitable for studying the past. In recent times, History has increasingly been relegated to the background especially in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the discipline has continued to loom large. Its multifaceted and utilitarian dimensions leave the historian with excess of historical reconstruction to embark upon. Until the 19th century, History was distinctively concerned with political events. Historians wrote exclusively about the biography of great men, wars, diplomacy and affairs of the state. The developments that were essentially anchored on increasing economic and technological discoveries including the use of ethnographical data, amplified the study of History thereby incorporating other disciplines in the process. Today, historians rely not only on politics but economics, psychology, law, archaeology, language/linguistics, geography anthropology, science and technology, etcetera, to interpret and reconstruct the past. The central argument in this paper is that History has by this interconnectedness demonstrated the great virtue of humility by accommodating and assimilating other disciplines thereby allowing historians to benefit comprehensively from these disciplines. The paper concludes that because of the many theories and laws historians draw from the adjunct disciplines in interpreting History, it becomes obvious why thoroughbred graduates of History demonstrate versatility in any area they are called to serve.

INTRODUCTION

More than any subject or course of study, History has received the lion's share of neglect, criticism and under-estimation. The challenges before History are manifold, yet, its role in the society has remained the basis for any form of change and development. The general characteristics of History, have generated piles of arguments regarding the following: the meaning of History; the classification of History as either the arts, social sciences or the natural sciences; the perspectives and methodological approaches to be adopted for study; or what measure of objectivity should the Historian's treatment and interpretation of "facts" demonstrate, etc. Meanwhile, the general notions about the discipline in recent times and the arguments surrounding it have been the neglect, decline and its relevance to the society in the 21st century. This partly stems from the increasingly domineering influence of science and technology. In the academic circle, continental Historians tailor their definitions of History to mean a mirror of what the historians think it should be. For E.H. Carr, a famous historian, History is viewed as an "unending dialogue between the present and the past" (Carr, 1990:1-27). Will Durant, another renowned historian, defines it as "a narrative of what civilized men have thought or done in past time" (Durant, 2010:1-8). Prof Reiner, considering the social dimensions of History, defined it as "the memories of societies" (Reiner, 1950:3).

However, scholars from other disciplines have portrayed History as being pedantic, merely pedagogic and over-concerned with the detailed pursuit of the insignificance (Ina, 2009:3). Its worth has been underestimated because these scholars believe that other disciplines have undergone changes and are methodologically improved to undertake the study of their past. They argue that if scholars across disciplines can tell the "story" of their various disciplines, such as a scientist writing the History of science, wherein lies the connect between History and other disciplines? (Alison Kitson, et al, 2011: 110-125). Nevertheless, methodological improvement across disciplines is not reason enough to explain or play down the overwhelming "give and take" conditions surrounding History and other disciplines. History derives heavily from other disciplines and vice-versa. This symbiosis makes the study of History go beyond story-telling and situates it, first of all, in the realm of science as the name *Historia* seems to suggest (Rao, 2006:1). Irrespective of how acquainted or knowledgeable one appears in his area of discipline, it does not suggest:

comprehensive grasp of other components of knowledge as it revolves the art and science of life. In fact, most disciplines are best at recitation and repetition of a set of knowledge without breaking, while others only await the outbreak of development to remain fashionable and relevant. Historians are gifted with some cardinal qualities that make them unique in their field and relevant across disciplines. History is multifarious and utilitarian in dimensions. This fact makes the discipline a study in comprehensiveness.

The 'scientific' method of enquiring or researching into the past constitutes one of the many ways in historical analysis. The idea of gathering, deconstructing and constructing what is discovered is one of the methods and it entails sieving facts and reducing them to the crucibles for verification, authentication and conclusions. Of course, it must be said that not all about the past is historical facts until the facts are ascertained by the historian. To ascertain a fact and arrive at a conclusion, therefore, calls for a dive into other disciplines. At this point, History utilizes the knowledge in Social and Anthropological relations as well as Archaeological data to establish that a past was indeed a fact.

In another swoop, the historian does not accord remarks to discoveries unless he establishes the exact time of that event. This is called periodisation. It is common place to hear or see scholars, especially in other disciplines, use words like "time immemorial" or "some years" or "centuries ago" or "once upon a time" in an attempt to lay claim to exactitude. At this point, timing becomes crucial and a distinguishing factor in the historian's quest for knowledge.

After the analysis of historical facts comes the presentation or interpretation of findings. This methodology is not attributed to History alone. Objectivity is one characteristic in any body of knowledge that ensures that findings are presented in a manner that will warrant acceptance by all who seriously investigate them. Put differently, a historian's conclusion about a historical matter should be presented in a way that will attempt to exonerate the historian from bias. The historian is encouraged to be objective, but the passion he has for the subject matter, group prejudice, conflicting theories of historical interpretation, etcetera, most times disallows him from being so (Abia, 2009:12). The position the historian takes in reaching a conclusion, sometimes, draws largely from the interpretation earlier given on the subject, perhaps, as a result of misinformation. For example, an interpretation given by a political scientist on a political event may be drawn from the context of the event at that material time, but a historian, in trying to explain it, may give place to personal interpretation in the attempt to correct such impressions.

On the whole, we intend to establish that any study in History is never monotonous. It is flexible enough to accommodate other disciplines. History does not claim to be a repertoire but its methodology attests to its position as the melting pot of knowledge. As a discipline, it is a synthesis of many fields within the humanities,

science and social sciences applied to the understanding of human societies, both past and present. This work examines the linkages and benefits between History and a select few other disciplines: Anthropology, Geography, Economics, Philosophy, Political theory, Religion, Art and Literature, in the development and functions in the university and the society at large. The paper also upholds that the incidents of drought and flood, global temperature change, environmental degradation and outbreak of epidemics are all inclined to the sciences but their implications and effects on any society are subjects for study in History.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORY AND THE CONNECTION WITH OTHER ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES

There is no doubt that History has grown to be known as an embodiment of adjunct disciplines. Thus, it is imperative to trace the origin of the study of History to the point of connection with other disciplines.

History had existed from the time people began to articulate knowledge and disseminate information. However, it can be argued that the first set of people to devote interest to studying the past were the Greeks. At a time in the History of the Greeks, they were renowned for seeking knowledge and wisdom. One area which augmented their rich culture in knowledge and wisdom was History. In fact, the word known today as "History" was derived from the Greek noun *historia* meaning enquiry or research (Rao, 2006:1). History, in the early stages of the Greek civilization, was studied not as a separate discipline. It was an aspect of politics or philosophy usually embellished with strong literary mechanisms. Soon, the idea of inquiring or researching about the past became an area of specifically and interest for the likes of Herodotus and Thucydides in the light of the behemoth desolation that stirred the citizens of the once flourishing Greek city-states. The Greco-Persian and the Peloponnesian wars of that era provided, arguably, the basis for one of the earliest recorded events in History.

In the Medieval period, History did not enjoy autonomy; like in the ancient Greek city-states it was conceived as part of religious and literary studies. History was subsumed as adjunct to the disciplines of logic, theology, law and natural science, and was considered, rather, as something practised by well-educated men of learning, not subjected to the process of systems and procedures of Academia (Wikipedia). According to Nancy Partner:

The works of this period are often categorized by chronicles, and by literary histories. Chroniclers recorded events and dates of events with little prose or expansion ... (they) wrote one paragraph for each year, no matter how much or little happened, with one-sentence for each event in that year. In this

way chronicles would often give as much, or more, attention to things of little importance as those things of greater importance (Partner, 2005:35-68).

The focus of every chronicle in this era was on the performance of the kings in war and achievement during their reign. This led to the development of biographies with the result that History came to be regarded as the study of biographies of the kings and the people who shaped the destiny of their states, often referred to as prosopography. Unlike chronicles, Histories also were as much a part of Medieval Literature as other forms, such as the romance, revenge or vengeance. Most of them endeavoured to be readable, arming themselves against both "the listless hearer and the fastidious reader" by "presenting something which each may relish", and so providing for the joint "profit and entertainment of all" (Wikipedia).

Prior to the end of the Medieval period especially the last quarter of the 18th century, certain developments conspired to give birth to History as an academic discipline thus, sequestering it from the ambience of Literature, Philosophy, Religion, Law, and Ethics. Political and socio-economic upheavals that greeted the continental Europe during this period such as the French and Industrial Revolutions left a lot of people stranded and confused on how and why such situations could befall them. The philosophy of History shifted from the acts of the warrior kings to encompass the masses who were peasants protesting the continued dominance of the elite in politics, and the sudden replacement of human labour by industrial machines. In turn, people began to reason that in order to understand the politics of that era, there was need to dig into the past to ascertain the cause of such upheavals.

However, more than the Ancient and the Medieval periods, the modern period witnessed a cornucopia of changes and a massive run of debates and arguments among scholars that finally shaped the development of History into a full-fledged discipline. We need not be trapped by the details of those illuminating and productive periods of academic adventure. But notable among the scholars of that epoch were Croce, Leopold Von Ranke, J.B. Bury and Carl Barker. These scholars laid claims to one idea and refuted another, all bordering on the nature, the scope and methods of History, including its relevance to the society.

The 20th century, in particular, saw the emergence of interdisciplinary approach to the study of History. Historians, from this period, borrowed from the social sciences those things which could help them present a synthesis in as complex a manner as possible within a behavioural frame.

History – 'Art or Science'?

The idea of whether to confine History to either art or science disciplines has remained a contentious issue among scholars. Perhaps, the debate would attend some

levels of resolution if explanations are given to the concepts "art" and "science". The word 'science' literally means knowledge. Generally, it means systematic way of gathering and organizing knowledge. "Science is knowledge ascertained by observation and experiment, critically tested, systemized and brought under general principle. This system uses observation and experimentation to describe and explain natural phenomena. According to Myneni, the chief characteristics of science are universality, exactness, precision and predictability (Myneni, 2010:4).

Conclusions in science are based on evidence, experiment and observation.

On the other hand, 'Art' means 'skill' or a peculiar way of doing a particular thing. It can be improved by practice and guided by principles. The word 'Arts' is used in other ways to mean 'Humanities' or 'Liberal Arts'. Whichever form it takes, the arts are explained as a group of educational disciplines which aim at the general and liberal education of a person for manhood and citizenship. Characteristically, they are not allowed much room for experiment or, with the possible exception of 'Philosophy', much speculation (Etuk, 2007: 1-2).

History as an Art

Those who believe that History is an art are perhaps informed by the fact that History has certain attributes of the Arts which deal with language of expression and aesthetic value. History deals with the language of literature which is concerned with the proper application of diction and correctness of grammar (Allgreatquotes). A Historian who is not apt with the use of grammar may be liable to get the letters in the wrong place. This error alone is bound to project a historical document in a way that subjects it to multiple interpretations. In this vein, George Eliot states that "correct English is the slang of prigs who write History and essays" (Rickman, 1961 : 34).

According to Rickman, "History deals with sequence of events, which are short of precision at the point of analysis while science is concerned with the routine appearance of things and aims at generation and the establishment of regularities, governed by laws" (Rickman, 1961:34). This Historian uses his imagination to make the past real and credible to his readers and often time allows sentiments to override historical interpretation. To this end Collingwood opines, "events of History are the things which the historian looks, not at, but through, to discern the thought within" (Collinwood, 1946:1-16). It is common sense to state, therefore, that discerning the thought of man in the past, concerning his actions and reasons given for such action, is nothing to go by if of a truth we hold in esteem the words of William Shakespeare: "There is no art to find the mind's construction ... " (Shakespeare, 1959). In other words, human beings cannot be subjected to test in the laboratory as done in the natural sciences since the human mind, according to Pinto, is immaterial (Taylor. 2001: 156). Hence, what is immaterial is uncertain and lacks predictability.

It, therefore, must be admitted that History is not and cannot be an exact

science in the sense that Physics and Chemistry are. The concepts of Perspectives and Causation in History and even the fact of Historians are subject to multiple interpretations which defy exactitude and certainties. For the sciences, the classification of facts and the formation upon that basis of absolute judgments, which are consistent and universally valid, sums up the essential aim of modern sciences. The immeasurability of the human character is summarized in these words by Appadorai: "The motives which lead men to act, no less than the consequences of their acts, are so complex and variable that it is difficult accurately to determine the one or confidently to predict the other" (Appadorai, 2009: 7 -9).

History as Science:

It is possible to trace the rather far-fetched view of history as a science to the genesis of the meaning of the word *historia*. The Greek word *historia*, which means "enquiry" may have conferred on R. G. Collinwood the notion that History, like the sciences, always follows the trends of enquiry to find out. According to him, History is a science of a special kind whose business is to study events inaccessible to the historian's observation (Collinwood, 34). Thus, History aims at discovering facts of the past events and interpreting them objectively. It employs various traits of enquiry such as observation, classification, and formulation of hypotheses and explanation of evidence in reconstructing the past. Collinwood was not the only one in this line of thought. Karl Marx also used the scientific methods of Historical materialism to interpret History. Furthermore, the argument that History is a science draws aptly from the words of Cooper and Chapman that historical enquiry into the past takes disciplined and well-coordinated methods just like science. They argue further:

it is not possible to make warranted historical claims which are not supported by sufficient weight of evidence, or which depend on evidence which are (sic) deeply flawed, or which are countered by other evidence. To accept this premise is to understand something important about life in general... something of whose status is well known (Cooper and Chapman, 2009:156).

But matters on this subject came to a head in the late 19th century when scientific discoveries of that era experienced changes and developments that demystified the attributes of timelessness and universality. Prof. J. B. Bury in response to these scientific developments proposed in 1903 that "History is science no more no less" (Baynes, 1929:234). Challenging the moral and literary approaches he stated: "To clothe the story in literary dress is no more the part of a historian that it is the part of an astronomer to present in an artistic shape the story of the stars" (Baynes,

234).

He further advocated for historians 'a systematic and minute method of analyzing their source' and 'microscopic criticism' (Baynes, 235).

History as a Social Science:

Some scholars are of the view that History is neither pure science nor pure art. In other words, they see History as a blending of the two. They situate History in the discipline of Social Sciences. The conception of the Social sciences developed during the 19th century. The cause was championed by the likes of Professors E.H Carr and S.W.F Holloway (Holloway, 2007: 15-180; Carr, 1990:57; Burton, 1962:1-14), who advanced the view that History is the central social science since it deals with social phenomenon and comprehensively with the past, present and future of man. In supporting this line of thought, Darby posited that History is basic to social science rather in a way that Mathematics is basic to natural science (Olisa and Obiukwu, 1992:471-489).

From the above argument, we arrive at the following conclusion regarding the classification of History as Art or Science

1. History is a unique subject possessing the potentials of both an art and a science.
2. History is a social science and an art. In that condition History shows its flexibility, ubiquity and variety.
3. History as a subject or course of study is more or less completely at the mercy of sources.

HISTORY AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DISCIPLINES

a) The Necessity of Correlation in our Universities

History is one of the easiest subjects to read and understand. It possesses the greatest virtue of humility and alacrity to learn from the other disciplines. This is because it draws a lot from other disciplines (Humanities (Arts), Social Science and Pure Science), in a bid to explain or give a solution to a subject matter. Nonetheless, the division of different sectors of knowledge as witnessed today in the universities and government policies have consistently reduced the learning of History in our schools and also conspired to deny the graduates of these institutions this veritable tool of self-development.

An academic discipline, on the other hand, is a branch of knowledge which is taught with this or that kind of method. Thus, History, political science, economics, linguistics, anthropology, physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, geography *et cetera* are considered different disciplines. The choice of a method depends on a discipline. Every discipline, as it experiences growth, adopts suitable methods that are

contemporaneous with time. One factor which serves to attest to the growth of that discipline is usually the development of adjunct disciplines.

Adjunct disciplines raise the question of interdisciplinary approach to studies. According to Jacobs, interdisciplinary approach means a knowledge view and curriculum approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, topic, issue, problem, or work (Jacobs, 2012). With this interdisciplinary mindset, a Historian synthesizes historical facts in responding to the challenge to historical question by pulling evidence from multiple disciplines. The historian could respond in a variety of ways, such as making a comparison of the relative truth of folktales and probability equations or engaging his informant in an oral debate over time.

Learning cannot be said to be impactful and wholesome until it is correlated with the learning achieved from the other different areas of knowledge. This approach of watertight compartment in one area of knowledge should be disregarded because it does not allow the mind to assimilate and correlate with other disciplines with the view to making a total man. Our graduates today are called half-baked not because they are outright incompetent but because developments in learning have confined them to 'specialize' in a particular field of learning thereby denying them the opportunity of tapping from other sources. When we speak of Udo Udoma, Blankson Ikpe, Monday Abasiattai, Okon Edet Uya, Chinua Achebe, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Christopher Okigbo, Chinweizu, Ime Ikiddeh, Eskor Toyo and Tafawa Balewa, amongst others, we speak of people who proved a mettle in their areas of calling yet covered a lot of grounds in areas outside their field. They were all products of institutions of higher learning as we have today, but they made the difference because the lessons across disciplines were rather more emphatic and practical-oriented than now. Whatever their academic successes were, whatever their ultimate vocational destinations, these leaders developed and demonstrated understanding, which equipped them to participate fully in government and governance. It was easier to find a Tafawa Balewa who was a graduate of the sciences yet exhibited a strong control over the Humanities before his students. It also was a typical lesson in inter-disciplinary approach for an Achebe, a high flying potential student of medicine making a swap and carving a niche for himself as a literary giant.

It cannot be denied that efforts have been made in our universities to educate students across disciplines but available records in leadership and followership structure, in recent times, indicate that both parties are bereft of any knowledge to show that they were taught beyond the levels of their disciplines. It therefore means that the contents of the inter-disciplinary curriculum are not adequate or sufficient enough to carry students beyond the walls of the university. We draw a lesson from the Ambassadorial nominee in 2011, who was not capable of reciting the first and second stanzas of Nigeria's National Anthem before the National Assembly. Here was a

nominee who was ready to represent the nation and yet had no basic knowledge of the nation's History. Of course, she was massively educated but the truth is that it was lopsided and lacked genuine patriotism. It is therefore important to note that the recent (2014) National Conference proposed History as a compulsory subject in our school system. It was Dr. Clement Mgbada, a product of Department of History, University of Uyo who sponsored the motion and it sailed through. Writing on the need for interdisciplinary methods, Siddiqui notes:

a single learning experience of human beings cannot contribute full knowledge about any particular aspect of society (Siddiqui, 2007;43-52).

Christine Counsell, also emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary approach through History education, echoed:

History is the diversity and complexity of past society. A good historical education will challenge stereotypes, avoid homogenization of nations or groups and help people to understand that not all [people] in the past thought and acted in the same way (Counsell, 2004:30-36).

Thus, learning must place emphasis on comprehensiveness and its application must provide a basis for interrelatedness with other disciplines to engender a strong and virile political and socio-economic entity. History provides the basis for the above conditions. The necessity of History's correlation with other disciplines is, therefore, essential in making knowledge concrete, having a utilitarian and comprehensive dimension.

The following points are summarized to indicate the necessity of adjunct disciplines:

1. to make learning more stable and permanent;
2. To provide more practical learning to students;
3. To enable the students to have complete understanding of their surroundings;
4. To develop essential requirement of healthy citizenship;
5. To make the learning more economical, acquiring more in a short period of time;
6. To develop interest in the students to acquire more knowledge about a number of things;
7. To make the load of curriculum light and avoid unnecessary multiplication of efforts;
8. To integrate the learning with the real lives of the students;
9. To develop a variety of human and social qualities such as cooperation, modesty, open-mindedness, and aptitude in making critical judgment; and

10. To develop the concept of broad-based curriculum.

HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Present events often have their roots in the past. For instance, the study of the Nigerian political system must start with a historical antecedent. Today, Nigeria's image in the international system has suffered a great setback. If Nigeria is still reckoned as the *Giant of Africa*, it is perhaps in its possession of massive potentials in different areas to enable it to stage a comeback to world reckoning anytime she is ready to take up the challenge. The first port of call in apportioning blames to the problem of the country is the nature of politics and the political system.

The masses, analysts and experts who keep lamenting over how bad the country has grown point consistently to History as being the bane of Nigerian politics. History here means (a) the origin of the problem (which is tied to the national groups' merger of 1914) and (b) the inability of political leaders to learn from past errors. The nation, through her day to day politics, violates the historical warning of Prof George Santayana that "those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (Santayana, 1905). To this end, History and Politics can be said to be intimately connected. According to Appadorai, History is the record of past events and movements, their causes and interrelations. History surveys the economic, religious, intellectual and social developments as well as the study of states, their growth and organization and their relations with one another (Appadorai, 2003:7-9). The areas covered in the above definition constitute essential elements on which political analyses are centred. That is, politics uses historical facts to arrive at the general laws, hypotheses, theories, principles and conclusions for political life. The State and the machinery that runs its affairs cannot be understood without a grasp of its historical background and also an excerpt from History must be attached to the study of political ideas. It was this mutual interdependence that informed Seeley's statement that "History without political science has no fruit; political science without History has no root" (Hesketh, 2011:30-56).

Burges also remarked "separate them (History and Politics) and the one becomes a cripple if not a corpse and the other a will of the wisp" (Jalapalan, 2002:43).

However, Edward Freeman's contention that "History is past politics ... past politic is present History" (Kraus, 1985:45) was strongly refuted by C. C. Mbah. The latter argued that "History is certainly not past politics, (since) much of it is outside the area of political science because the History of art, of science, inventions, discoveries, language, dress *etcetera* is purely narrative, but political science deals directly or indirectly with the study of the state (Mbah, 2007:76-87). Supporting this augment, Myneni outlines the fundamental differences that separate them as distinctive disciplines:

- a. History is descriptive while Political Science is normative
- b. Political Science is philosophical and speculative while History only attempts to present facts as they happened
- c. History studies the past and present events while Political Science is with the future (Myneni, 2010:6-11).

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

From the songs of one of the Pan-Africanists and the Black emancipation advocates, Nesta Robert Marley (Bob Marley), came the cry, "emancipate yourselves from mental slavery, none but ourselves can free our mind ..." (Marley, 1978). These lines were voiced against the background of premature, highly prejudiced and racially downgrading calls from a host of Eurocentric bigots (among these, Trevor-Roper, Hegel, Hurne, Hampel and Popper).

This statement was as specifically pointed out by Markowitz:

Africans had no History, meaning that they did not change or progress or have science, art or inventions among themselves. The African was ignorant or simple, vicious, or barbaric. He needed education, civilization, culture, religion, knowledge, discipline law and punishment for future beneficial development (Markowitz, 1970: 15).

Armed with the consciousness that the Europeans would spare no thought, let alone give Africans the chance to stake a claim in the current trends of civilization, enlightened Blacks began to task their minds to see in what way they could respond to the malicious views held against the Black race.

One of the most and increasingly consistent avenues to refute the largely uninformed statements against the 'unfruitfulness' of Africa was the use of Archaeology. More than any other discipline, Archaeology enabled and undoubtedly provided the scientific evidence needed to restore the dignity of Africa. Archaeology is simply the scientific study of the relics or remnants of the past. Just like History, Archaeology studies the past but unlike History, there must be the presence of artifacts or material components placed under further scientific or laboratory investigation through process of carbon dating. These artifacts could be remains of architecture, dead organisms, coins, inscriptions and feasible cultural components like art works. According to Olu Obafemi,

the Senegalese Egyptologist and Historian, Cheik

Anta Diop, began for Africa this task of self-discovery or re-discovery by using archaeological evidences to set aside all Euro-centric theories of the origin of mankind and human civilization and even went further to locate the beginning of man as both Negroid and Egyptian (Obafemi, 2008:58).

Described in Uya as the "handmaiden of History" (Uya, 2004:50), archaeology, contributed a great deal in the reconstruction of the early economic activities of certain regions in Africa region. Basil Davidson was also of the opinion that the kingdoms or Africa are among the oldest political institutions anywhere (Obafemi, 2008: 15).

Away from the shores of Africa, it is also a common knowledge that the Indus valley civilization was uncovered by the spade of the Indian archaeologist (Rao, 2006: 6). Riding on the back of archaeological discoveries coupled with the passion inflamed by Black Emancipation Movements, the likes of Kenneth Dike and Biobaku, working on the History of different parts of Nigeria, began the process of reinterpreting Nigerian History. It was, according to Obara Ikime,

largely a consequences of their work and others that African History became accepted as a worthy branch of the discipline of History, fit to be taught to the human species, black, yellow, white, or pink (Obafemi, 2008:58).

The task before historians today, especially in Africa, is that of a truth we know that our past still lies beneath the earth surface, largely untouched and awaiting excavation. Much of what we glorsy today is merely the little efforts of the Europeans and some few Africans who excavated few sites to unravel the rich cultural remains of our past in the early post - independence era. The hitherto national archives, research institutes, national museums that sprang with African independence are either under-utilized or lying in a comatose state. The museums are sparingly occupied with same artifacts that donned the spaces in the early years of independence. It is therefore a call to duty for historians and archaeologists to go back to the field and continue thereon, with the task of uncovering those civilizations that made us outstanding and unique as black people especially in this period when the hues and cries of disintegration is stirring us in the face.

HISTORY AND ECONOMICS

Man's eternal quest for better livelihood and material goods constitutes the

main theme of economics and History. History makes it possible to understand the economic situation of the country. All the important principles of economics are rooted in an understanding of History. The present economic problems can only be studied in the light of the past series of economic events from the perspective of economic history (Siddiqui, 2007:43-52). Also, a number of historical events have their root in economic reasons. History cannot provide all the background of the society, unless and until it covers economic development of human beings. What does the historian use in judging how developed a society is? It is to a large extent on the verification of the economic policies and their implications on the average citizens. History reckons a nation as 'developed' if such nation, through economic resources, is capable of providing the basic needs of the populace.

History and economics are related in a way that both are concerned with the study of human institutions. For instance, in the event the Federal Government enunciates an economic policy that intends to ameliorate poverty and improve the standards of living, while economies would immediately be interested in problems regarding scarcity and use of scarce resources, it behooves on economic History to seek to draw comparison between such policies and the previous ones to know what may guarantee the success or failure of the new policy. In doing this, the historian would have established a bedrock, frame or value with which the economist builds his economic policies. The nation's agricultural programmes of the late 1970s, in the names of OFN, NCFP, and her economic counterparts, SAP, NAPEP, OMPADEC, *etcetera* are some of the poverty-alleviating institutions on which future economic policies could be based, and the History which economists should learn from. All these pre-occupy the attention of economists and historians, but the historian is interested in digging deep into the past to trace the root cause of the problem and from where the existing policies for economic development could be made.

Furthermore, Economic theories like Socialism, Communism and African Socialism are themselves influenced by History. For example, a study of economies prior to the 19th century revolutions revealed economic inequalities that increasingly separated the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. This long History of economic domination provided Karl Marx and neo-Marxists the avenue to explore other economic conditions needed to cushion the effect of exploitation. Karl Marx's call for the unity and revolutions of workers was an attempt to avoid a continuous repetition of *History*, which he described as a tragedy, and countering of such History with *revolutions*, which he called the locomotives of History (Sherman, 1995:5). In other words, his advocacy for a change from the old and 'repressive' economic order was the end of History while the approach to the new economic order was a History in the making. This clearly shows that History and economics are inseparable.

In spite of the intimate relationship, one of the outstanding differences between the two disciplines is that of value. While economics attaches value only to what brings

profit or loss to the society, irrespective of the means; values are central to History and its estimation goes beyond the surface as it considers the motives, feelings, passions and reactions in the past and how it affects the present studies of man and the society.

HISTORY AND SOCIOLOGY

How does History relate with Sociology? History and Sociology are related in the sense that Sociology and modern historiography had their origin in the 19th century (Worsely, 2008). History bequeathed to modern sociology the notion of historical types of society and thus enabled the sociologists to build classification of societies. This led to the new venture called Social History. Social Historians are concerned with the study of the historical development of human society. They study ancient customs, modes of living, various stages of life and past social institutions through the historical analysis (Worsely, 2008). In fact, both disciplines have proved a 'perfect' combination in the study of the human society. The interaction between two disciplines can be found in their subject matter. The subject matter of sociology and History overlap to a considerable extent. The historian frequently provides the material which the sociologist uses. A Sociologist cannot arrive at generalizations between two countries or societies except he does an in-depth historical study using comparative methods.

Sociologists depend upon the data which only a historian can supply. However, the dependence is vice versa. Sociological research also provides the information which the historians need. There is evidence of cooperation by sociologists and social historians. For example, the historian's account of the social structure of the 19th century towns and of the characteristics of the Medieval peasantry or the 18th century nobility and the sociologist's study of social History of a variety of professions (Bharat, 2011). Again, if a sociologist has to study family and marriage as social institutions he has to study their historical developments also. Owing to this reason, Arnold Toynbee's book, *A Study of History* and Spengler's book, *Decline of the West* are very valuable in the study of sociology. One author says that "what Philosophy is to the mental sciences, sociology is to the social sciences" (Asirvatham and Misra, 2009:6-12). Fundamentally, both disciplines cover a broad spectrum of the society, but technically, History deals more with the past while sociology is concerned with the future. That is why Professor G. E. Howard remarked, "History is the past Sociology and Sociology is the present History" (Kurnar, 2012).

There are points of differences between the two. Radcliffe- Brown provided a clear-cut though simplistic answer. According to him 'Sociology is homothetic, while History is ideographic' (Malhotra, 1969). This simply means Sociology is a generalizing science. Sociology seeks to embellish generations after a careful study of the social phenomena. But History is an individualizing science. History rarely makes generalizations. It seeks to establish the sequence in which events occurred.

their complexities. Nonetheless, History deals with the past events of man; it rarely or reluctantly draws conclusions regarding the present. History is concrete and sociology is abstract. According to Park, "History is the concrete while sociology is the abstract science of human experiences and human nature" (Gaub, 2007:104-117). Sociology studies mostly regular, the recurrent and the universal patterns of life. For instance, the sociologist does not study all the wars or battles waged by mankind. The historian is interested in the unique, the particular and the individual History. But, the historian studies all the wars waged by mankind in the past - the Punic Wars (264BC - 146BC), the Crimean War (1853 - 1856), the World Wars I and II (1914 - 1918; 1939 - 1945 respectively), the Indo-Pak wars (1947, 1965, 1971, 1999), the Vietnam War (1961 - 1970), the Yom Kippur War (October 6 - October 25, 1973), the Somali Civil War (1992 - 1994), Iraqi War (2003 - 2011) - part of the war on terror and 2011 Military intervention in Libya - part of the Libyan Civil War and Arab Spring, *etcetera*. For him each war is unique and significant.

Sociology is relatively a young social science. It has very short history of its own. It is not even two centuries old. However, History is an age-old social science. It has a long story of 2000 years or even more (Gaub, 104-117).

Sociologists are most interested in the contemporary events and recent past which is also related with History. Peter Worsley opines that "the best History is in fact sociology or sociology of the past (Worsley, 2008:13). Sociologists are interested in finding the general laws of the society whereas the historians are interested in narrating historical events in their chronological order. The sociologists would try to find out the common aspects of the events recorded by the historians.

However, given such works like Weber's *Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism* and Pitrin Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, the line for demarcation between History and sociology is becoming increasingly blurred. H.R. Trevor-Roper, for example, has tried to make a weak distinction by stating that the historian is concerned with the interplay between personality and massive social forces and that the sociologist is largely concerned with these social forces themselves (Roper, 1968). However, it is becoming increasingly clear that History and sociology cannot be radically separated. They deal with the same subject - matter such as men living in societies, sometimes from the same point of view and the trends that the two shall continue to borrow from each other extensively.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

A study of History reflects the influence of geographical factors. It is a historical fact that geographical factors such as climate, soil, rivers, mountains, sea, coastline and mineral resources contributed in no small measure to the rise and fall of civilizations, development and decline of cultures.

Geography does not simply mean towns, or even necessarily countries. It takes

for its study primarily this world of ours, and its sun, the distribution of land and water, energy, wind, system and ocean currents, as well as the configuration of the land surface. Geography lies at the root of History and Herder opines that "History is Geography set in motion (Limbrick, 1929). In other words, a geographic factor today becomes an historical fact tomorrow.

Before human beings can develop any considerable degree of community life or make any great progress and so bring themselves into History, certain geographical conditions must be fulfilled.

1. The area must guarantee adequate supply of food. For example, when Herodotus described 'Egypt as the gift of the Nile', he simply intended to convey a well known fact that the Nile river was the reason behind the illustrious developments in agricultural, intellectual, industrial campaigns witnessed in Egypt in that era.

2. Climatic conditions should, to some reasonable extent, stimulate and engender congenial environment for outdoor activities such as games, sea-faring, political discourse and socio-economic relations. Of course, this condition gave the Greeks an edge over the surrounding regions in their day to day internal and external diplomacy.

3. Geography must guarantee security from external foes. The pages of History are replete with stories of how kingdoms and nations fought, conquered and won, or were defeated in battles on the basis of their geographical locations. England's strategic water ways made her a dominant force in the world; Russia's winter breeze frustrated not once but twice German's encroachment of the territory; in Vietnam, the climate drained the soldiers' capabilities and made a mess of the US military campaign in the region.

This was the extent of damage as made known by Karnow:

It is a terrible country for fighting. The jungle trees and vines that cover the sharp ridges and deep valleys in the mountains make military movement difficult. The heat and rain and insects were almost worse than the enemy. Drenched in sweat, the men waded through flooded paddies and plantations, stopping from time to time to pick leeches out of their boots (Karnow, 1997).

In recent times, the extent of geographical impact on the History of nations has consistently been eroded by discoveries made in science and technology. Science has been employed to harness nature to suit the needs of man. The Israelis have demonstrated capabilities in overturning geographical challenges bestowed on her by History such as in spite of the absence of natural boundaries in some regions, Israel

maintains a strategic influence that has kept predators from encroachment. Again, the arid lands and desert regions are now transformed into livable conditions with increased agricultural activities yielding encouraging economic returns.

HISTORY AND LANGUAGE

History and language are like Siamese twins. They are undeniably intertwined. The ability to create and use language therefore is the most distinctive features of human beings. And through language, human beings learn their culture and also reconstruct the history of their society. Edemekong (2014:1) averred that “historical studies, one of the often misunderstood disciplines by non-historians, is concerned with the study of man as a social product of his environment having been constantly influenced by events that shape and define his responses to changes in his environment.” Language as the vessel of culture is much more than a means of communication. It influences our culture and thought processes. It is particularly more important in shaping our perception of reality and identity. The indispensability of language in embellishing the historical craft cannot in anyway be overemphasized. That is why Ushie (2011:143) has noted that “language is also society's fossil from which can be recovered the ways of life and worldviews of a people.” Two of Ushie's chapters in the book, *Essays on the History, Language and Culture of Bendi*, by Ushie and Imbua is relevant to this work. Chapter 3, for instance, is on “Images of the Slave and Slavery in the Oral Traditions of the Bette-Bendi, 1500 – 1700,” while chapter 6 is on “Language as a Fossil of History: Bette-Bendi and Bantu”

Fukuyama's (2006:81) grasp of the dept and range of the changes now sweeping through the world as a consequence of the directionality of history is also relevant to the study.

There have been several other adjunct disciplines that have contributed to enlarge the scope of History worldwide such as Psychology, Anthropology, Religious studies, Ethics, Law, *et cetera*. All the same, the few which have not been highlighted in this paper are not because they are less beneficial, superior or more important than the ones reviewed, but because time and space have conspired to restrict our scope.

CONCLUSION

From this analysis, I have attempted to lay bare not only the relevance of History in our universities and nation, but also how it could combine with other disciplines to evolve strategic methods for problem solving. Interdisciplinary approach to the study of History is a modern approach which marks a departure from the classical approach. It was only in the 19th century that different aspects of man's social life became independent subjects of empirical study as distinct from their embedding in philosophy. Accordingly, psychology, sociology, economics, political science *etcetera* emerged as independent scientific disciplines.

The interdisciplinary approach is of recent origin which assumed special importance in the later part of the twentieth century. It does not seek to re-merge all disciplines into a single Master of Science or Art. It insists that the results of our inquiry in any sphere should be based on and verified from the findings of all adjunct disciplines. Thus, History should not only make use of data, theories and models of the social sciences, but should also make a suitable contribution to an understanding of those disciplines. Moreover, some approaches to the study of History cover a limited range of inquiry due to reliance on a single method. This is also the case in philosophical, legal, economic, sociological, psychological and geographical disciplines as their methods become monotonous and turn out to be partial approaches. We have seen how this approach encourages mediocrity in the polity. On the contrary, the interdisciplinary approach seeks to overcome these shortcomings by relying on all other relevant disciplines for the purpose of evolving an integrated view of the subject. If fully embraced and entrenched in the system, with specific attention given to the study of History, the culture of hard work and scholarship will assume other positive dimensions.

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