

Historicizing Humanistic Scholarship for National Development in Nigeria

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Introduction

It is a great honor and indeed a privilege to have been invited by the organizers of this gathering to deliver this lecture on this great day of public book presentation of the well grounded-humanist, scholar of no mean repute and stature and indeed one of the most outstanding erudite professors of our time -Professor U.D Anyanwu. I have chosen to speak on '*Historicizing Humanistic Scholarship for National Development in Nigeria*' because it captures the theme that define his scholarship in his decades of academic engagement in several universities across the country. The issue of humanities and its value has dominated intellectual discourse over a period of time with a section insisting on its worthlessness in the workplace and the advocates in diverse climes approving its study just for the sake of it. No matter how it is denied there are immense benefits in humanities education especially in the contemporary world of intelligence and foreign policy given the reality that governments the world over rely on the expertise of historical, political, and cultural experts to show direction to what next the government would do to remain global reckoning. I probably may not be able to say much to this gathering except I situate my discussion on the parlous state of the humanities in Nigeria as we celebrate this one moment of humanities' finest hour in Nigeria.

My Concern

This morning I want to harp on the perilous state of the Humanities especially when placed side by side with the sciences and ponder a possible new role and perception for the field. It is curious to observe that government's hostility towards the Humanities evidenced by deliberate and long sustained science-favored policies is yet to provide any new breakthrough in science and technology. With millions of Naira allocated to science and

technology in research institutes and universities, their laboratories remain empty and in a sorry state with no inventions to justify the huge allocations. While every effort is made to keep the Humanities in the fringes and doldrums of scholarship, the field has refused to be consigned to the dustbin of irrelevance. What is more? The hostility from science-academics would seem to suggest that there must be very tangible disagreements between them (science academics) and colleagues in the Humanities. More painful is the reality that in alignment with government and its agencies, a gulf and disparity in salaries and emoluments has made the erstwhile apartheid regime in South Africa an enviable condition. As Nigeria is in the habit of cloning developments from outside her shores, the unwarranted hostile disposition towards the Humanities derives effectively from outside but while results are visible to justify huge budgetary allocations in the West, waste is the major outcome of this lopsided arrangement in Nigeria. Lamentations on the sidelining of the Humanities is real but its consequences are equally real. This explains the concern and agitations of stakeholders to deliberate on this challenge for purposes of national rebirth. A scholar had fumed that:

In short, what it comes down to is that the humanities have in recent decades been valued less and less, and have been funded more and more poorly in Western society. It is high time for this to change. That is in the interest not only of the humanities but also of society itself.... the Dutch government seems to have got the idea into its head that everything that's good for society emanates from technology and the applied sciences. Now that strikes me as shortsighted and in the end even disastrous for society and for these sciences themselves.¹

Recent developments in Nigeria, as elsewhere, have shown that research funding in the humanities and indeed history is

dwindling. The basic assumption is that studies in the humanities have nothing to offer in ICT, Science and Technology. This gross public policy misconduct demonstrates how shallow-minded policy makers understood the humanities in general. Using the litmus test of developments in Europe and America, there is need to re-emphasize the basic input of the humanities in science and technological developments. This is the focus of the chapter, even as it proposes a conscious repositioning of the Humanities globally, especially in Nigeria where a possible new and fresh direction could reinvigorate the field and open fresh opportunities for national growth and rebirth.

In contemporary higher education and research in Nigeria and Africa, much of the developed world, the humanities as a knowledge field is in a parlous state. There is its deliberate de-prioritization by policymakers, including many in the universities. On the ladder of relevance, it is the considered opinion of majority of concerned stakeholders that the:

...humanities consistently appear at the bottom of any list of national goals, if indeed they appear at all. It is clear that the marginalization of the humanities must be remedied, because no knowledge-led development strategy can succeed without a solid core of humanistic understanding and humane values. To envision the future, we must understand the lessons of the past. To act in the present, we must be sensitive to current cultural complexities. Reinvigorating the humanities, then, is a necessary first step for inspiring innovation in all fields of endeavor critical to development, such as the prudent, ethical management of natural resources and civic dialogue in the public sphere.²

The world is at crossroads on account of the rising irrelevance which the field of humanities has been forced into. From Africa to Europe and America, policy makers are consciously preparing caskets for the humanities and there seems to be no end in sight. The questions that readily come to mind is how did this happen; how did it come to be that the humanities have lost so much ground? In the humanities, a wide field and range of subjects of inquiry abound. They include but not limited to languages, literature, history, and philosophy. They take a whole lot of variety of forms beginning from sole research work of individual researchers to collaborative initiatives in the humanities. Funding in the humanities across the world is awfully dwindling. The humanities receive relatively small amounts of funding in comparison to other areas of knowledge, especially the sciences and technology based knowledge areas. Humanities' funding across the globe reveals a worrisome squeezing from all sides as federal and state funding, including charitable involvement stand at an all-time low. In the United States, 'the most recent available data show increases in funding, but the total remain below their pre-recession levels.³ Relying on the data gathered, reports reveal an array of funding sources, large and small, that underwrites the humanities but all such funding are on the reverse side of increment.⁴ Drawing very deeply from the most advanced societies in the world, academic research and development expenditures in the humanities between 2005 and 2012 show that:

Even at their 2012 high, expenditures on humanities R&D were dwarfed by those on research in the sciences and engineering. For example, expenditures on medical research were 60 times larger than funding for research in the humanities. Spending for humanities research equaled 0.55% of the amount dedicated to science and engineering R&D when all scientific fields—including agricultural sciences and others are considered.⁵

Furthermore, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Budget Request Versus Final Appropriation for the fiscal years between 1966-2014 reveals that the:

NEH which is the principal federal agency supporting projects in the humanities prospered from the late 1960s to 1979, before funding fell sharply in the 1980s, and again in 1995. Since that time, appropriations have been relatively flat. After a slight surge in funding that peaked in 2010, funds have fallen again in recent years due to inflation and cuts in appropriations, bringing the agency's resources down to \$146 million in 2014.⁶

For a long time, western societies have gained enormously from the hard sciences including medical sciences amongst others and this prosperity may certainly endure much longer. In recent times, people from poorer climes are beginning to benefit there from also. To that extent, the importance of the sciences and its relevance to humanity cannot be overemphasized. Very importantly, increased funding for the sciences is worth it but in error, many have assumed the irrelevance of the humanities to national growth. This signals an obvious disharmony between the sciences and humanities.

Prior to the 20th century, humanities occupied the pride of place across the world as it was regarded as 'essential to the formation of good and morally responsible citizens'. It dominated the curriculum with much emphasis on the 'study of classical languages, Latin and Greek'. But by the mid-20th century, the fortunes of humanities plummeted with the promotion of the study of hard sciences. It does seem that policy makers in the United States lost sight of the complementarity of the humanities when a conscious policy of underfunding the unit was implemented. They clearly forgot the public opinion and admission of America's first vice president and the second

president that lived between 1735 and 1826, John Adams to the effect that:

I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture....⁷

If for nothing else, President John Adams was a success on this as his son, John Quincy Adams having been tutored in the rigors of the humanities rose to be America's sixth president. But even in the 1960's, the U.S President's Commission on National Goals clearly amplified the importance and relevance of the humanities just like the sciences when the Commission volunteered that:

In the eyes of posterity, the success of the United States as a civilized society will be largely judged by the creative activities of its citizens in art, architecture, literature, music, and the sciences.⁸

The lopsidedness clearly evident in recent decades in the treatment of the sciences and humanities is a sure adventure and exploration towards national developmental stagnation. For all societies, there is a Siamese link between the sciences and the humanities especially, from the perspective of national growth and development.⁹ Nigeria is not an exception. It is important to note that humanities have to do with the rediscovery of the glories that were Rome and Greece, through philosophy, history and literature. It is a term used for the collective reference to all branches of learning concerned with human thoughts, feelings, relations, indeed, man's mind, as distinguished from the sciences which deal with man's physical existence and surroundings.¹⁰ The

development of science and technology certainly cannot be made possible outside the orbit of humanities. Sadly, Nigeria appears to be a nation in so much hurry to secure economic self-reliance outside the necessary ingredients of development especially history. The development history and philosophy of Britain and Europe must be reappraised in view of Nigeria's present circumstances. For instance, what led to the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution? What led Malthus to study about population and why was there crises and revolutions at certain periods in the history of urban development in Europe? How and why did those crises metamorphose into or engender meaningful development? If Nigeria is truly in search of development, we must provide answers to these questions. In this discourse, I propose to focus on the following questions; namely: what are the Humanities? What are the lessons from West on development, how do we harness our potentials for development and how do we strengthening Humanities education in Nigeria in other to achieve the needful?

What are the Humanities?

The academic field of Humanities defies one generally acceptable definition. It may be taken as a study or appreciation of human conditions through the instrumentality of critical, speculative and analytical methods. It consists of interrelated disciplines with man as its focal point of study within the context of socio-cultural and existential realities. All these are anchored on the insatiability of man in his endless search for knowledge; seeking explanations to life and living.¹¹The American Council of Learned Societies' Report of the Commission on the Humanities clearly recommended the setting up of a Humanities' Foundation to resuscitate the dwindling fortunes of the Humanities in the mid-1960s. When the United States National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 was established in 1965, it provided a more detailed definition of Humanities to encapsulate:

the study and interpretation of the following: language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature;

history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism, and theory of the arts; those aspects of the social sciences which have humanistic content and employ humanistic methods; and the study and application of the Humanities to the human environment with particular attention to reflecting our diverse heritage, traditions, and history and to the relevance of the Humanities to the current conditions of national life.¹²

Understanding Humanities for man is one area the modern people in Africa and indeed in Nigeria appear to be drifting. In literature for example, the success recorded by Professor Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiong o, or Wole Soyinka has not made significant and commensurate impact on African languages not even Swahili assumed to be the most popular African language. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* was translated in over 50 world languages its Igbo version if actually published is not readily available and should the Igbo version be made available now, how many people will read it? On the other hand and very sadly too, readership in the English Language is widely subscribed to since Nobel laureates in literature lack African language appeal.

In the discipline of History, with the attachment of nomenclatures such as International Relations, International Studies, Strategic Studies, and Diplomacy, only a few lecturers in the nearest future if not now may be engaged in the teaching of African History in Nigerian Universities. Elsewhere in the western world such as in the UK and USA, emphasis on African History remains alive and grants for research readily available. Centers for Africana Studies in Michigan State University, Bowling Green State University, Ohio and the School of African and Oriental Studies in London have excellent encouragement in the teaching of Yoruba, Swahili and Igbo Languages. The implication is that students of African history are encouraged to learn rudimentary

aspects of these languages, before embarking on research trips. Although history is not a prophetic discipline, I make bold to assert that in the near future, Europeans will teach Africans African History. Permit me to inconvenience us a little with a few examples to justify my claim.

Humanities and the Science: Dilemma of Twins

The Wikipedia affirms that 'twins are two offspring produced by the same pregnancy' and may either be monozygotic (identical) or dizygotic (fraternal). The analogy of twins emphasizes and amplifies the sameness and similarity of the two offspring that came into life courtesy of one zygote (egg) that split into two embryos. Confirmed observations reveal the dilemma between twins, especially in the area of identity and in the area of parental preferences. As partners in the advancement of humanity, the field of humanities and sciences are inseparably linked to the progress and prosperity of man and mankind. Although twins in most cases are expected to be by behavior and association inseparable and close, several instances exist where they manifest as mutually opposed to one another. In most cases, parental preferences provoke animosity and hostility amongst them. For the humanities and sciences, their contributions to mankind remain un-paralleled but a gully of hostility has been created between them as this manifests so clearly in all spheres of life now, including the universities where fellow academics in non-Humanities' disciplines exhibit ill-informed hostility and disdain towards the humanities.¹³

In a good number of universities in Nigeria, the admission process and procedures are skewed in favour of the sciences in the ratio of 80:20, 60: 40 or even 70:30. This happens even in normal conventional universities with no special appellation attached to its name i.e University of Science and Technology. The explanation often advanced is that the world is moving to the next level where science determines the survivability or otherwise of mankind. But how do you explain admitting ill-qualified candidates for the sciences that after two sessions of poor CGPA of less than 1.0 turn round and dump them in the Humanities with an excuse of the need to have a 'change of course'? When the Humanities become dumping grounds for poor science students

approximates exporting the contradictions of poor science education to the Humanities. This on its own worsens the parlous state of the Humanities that is daily assailed by internally and externally-generated contradictions.

Challenges to the Humanities

If there are challenges confronting the Humanities, how did it begin? As expected, views vary and are as divergent as they come. Oyeweso¹⁴ insists that the emergence and publication of Darwinian Theory by Charles Darwin in his controversial work *Origin of Species*, kick-started the misfortune of the humanities in 1859. But it was Byrum's pessimism on the future of the Humanities in his work, *Much Ado about Little? The Crisis in the Humanities*¹⁵ that drove home the nail on humanities' coffin as it identified a myriad of problems confronting the field. The Humanities liberate the mind from bondage and so Oyeweso affirmed that 'the elite who have benefitted from different fields of study in the Humanities and occupied top positions in the society felt threatened by the roles of the Humanities at liberating common people'.¹⁶ He also identified the 'the anti-intellectual tendency of the ruling class has been nakedly displayed in the budget allocation and education policy.¹⁷ In Oyeweso's view, the 'two subtle strategies were adopted by this group to mute the voices of scholars in Humanities to the effect that:

...efforts have been made to redirect and narrow the range of societal debates to insignificant and almost irrelevant issues. Second, there were also bureaucratic and systematic persecutions of the Humanities through financing and administrative policies.¹⁸

A decline in societal values may have also worsened the woes of the Humanities with the loss of societal values and its replacement with utilitarian values that promote and use wealth and materialism as yardstick for progress and development. This much was captured by Oloruntimehin who observed in 1976 that:

There is little doubt that we are in the age of materialism, interested primarily in pursuit and results of demonstrable immediate benefit. It is an age which conceives of progress nearly exclusively in term of affluence and technological feat.¹⁹

Since the global economy is controlled by economic dictators in Euro-American centers of world commerce with overseeing capacity and capability in the peripheral and fringe states, the preferred tendency is to 'link the value of education directly to the employability of its products'. And with the poverty and unemployment levels of products of the Humanities assuming alarming proportions, Humanities became objects of ridicule and persecution in the hands of these avaricious capitalist that shift goal posts at will to satisfy their selfish aims. Sadly, the irresponsible proliferation of Humanities disciplines has ensured the massive turn out of more graduates that cannot be gainfully employed leading to the creation of reserve pool of wasted talents eagerly waiting to undo their respective countries. More importantly, a reorientation of scholars in the Humanities has become very essential if the challenges facing the field will be overcome. For instance, the passive, unconcerned and uninvolved attitudes of scholars remain most worrisome as many merely recline from public glare and feel consoled, withdrawn and contented in the cocoons of their classrooms. Keeping and seeking refuge ensures low research outcomes, making scholars fail to make needed contribution to knowledge. In addition, the prevailing globalization trend seems to have affected the Humanities as scholars here already used to the old ways of doing things have fallen to the rigours of the new concept. And with the rise in the utilization of ICT that has turned the world into a global village, scholars in the various disciplines in the Humanities have rigidly refused to change with the times by conservatively adhering to the old curricula in the delivery of the lectures and sundry duties. Thus, unable to catch up with the times, they have been condemned to remain stagnant and immobile in the new dispensation. On account of the above, the place and relevance of

the Humanities in human development become increasingly threatened.

The United States with great feats in the sciences still has some respect for the Humanities. While disciplines in the Humanities in Nigeria are struggling to effect name change to still remain relevant in attracting sizeable admission numbers, Universities in the United States not only remain committed to the vision and mission leading to the establishment of the several departments across the land. In the 1990s, a good number of Nigerian Universities effected name changes in several departments in the Humanities. Thus, the History department in over 90% of the Universities metamorphosed into new names by adding 'international relations', 'international studies', 'strategic studies', 'diplomatic studies' etc to their old names. This was done to rejig the relevance of the fast fading department rapidly drifting into oblivion.²⁰ Sometime in 2014, a team of history professors in Nigerian Universities that included this writer paid a courtesy call on the then Nigerian President - Dr Goodluck Jonathan with a request that he instruct or cause an action to be taken to restore history in the secondary school curriculum across the country. In the President's affirmative response, he gleefully recounted his impression of history in his youthful years and reeled out the importance of history to national development. He made a prompt announcement promising the restoration of history in secondary schools. Strangely but expectedly, three years down the line, no tangible effort has been made to effect the presidential pronouncement. But while Nigeria was vacillating in the 21st century in doing the needful, the US congress as far back as 1965 affirmed that 'The arts and the Humanities belong to all the people of the United States'.²¹ How then can Nigeria as a a a country reposition the Humanities in order to benefit from the very many positives that come with it?

Lessons from Western development

The first step in the quest for development in the western world was mental decolonization; a project meant to free their mindset from all religious encumbrances. Beginning from 1305 when papal

rule was at its zenith across Europe, its domination was gradually being questioned and challenged. The heresy associated with the activities of the Lutherans and Calvinists between 1520 and 1560 questioned the credibility of purgatory, invocation of the saints and absolute supremacy of the papacy.²² The Catholic Church came with the Counter Reformation to checkmate corruption in the system. The imminent corruption in papal rule uncontrollably led to the thirty years war triggered by various religious groups.²³ It was after the thirty years war that development in Europe gradually disassociated itself from any form of religious idiocy.

In Nigeria, those laughable events exhibited by the Church in Europe are still commonplace. These include the biblical injunction of tithing as contained in Malachi chapter 3 verse 10 but this has become extortionist in implementation as General Overseers use such tithes and offerings in living in questionable opulence, buying flamboyant cars, houses and private jets, which either the government can hire at times to import ammunition from South Africa or anywhere they deemed fit. In most cases, church offerings are collected from the have-nots to build universities that the children of the poor and their unborn grand children may never afford to attend. So heartless are leaders of these religious sects that their interests are barbaric, deceitful or oppressive and lacking the sense of benevolence which they profess. Just imagine a widow whose tithes and offerings are used to build a university no member of her generation will ever access. Reason? The fees have been fixed beyond the reach of her poor background.

What of the profligate economic waste by the government over these years expended on pilgrimages, which boosts the economy of Israel and Saudi Arabia? So annoying are our public policies that in the midst of economic challenges, government extended public holidays in July 2016 when the Nigerian nation was bleeding and losing billions of dollars on account of the search for the moon, a dilemma that should have been handled by the meteorological unit of the federal government. And what about a state within the same period that further kept workers at home on forced holidays because the governor would not want the Chief Judge to carry out court

instructions that was considered injurious to his personal and group interests?

When Copernicus made scientific breakthrough, it was orchestrated by circumstances of various enigmatic assumptions which needed questioning. He maintained that the sun rotates around the earth and not the earth being the centre of the planetary system. This earned him the hatred of the papal authority. Subsequently, the role of revolutionist philosophers like John Locke who challenged the idea of absolute monarchy and repressive rule deserves applause as an achievement of a humanistic scholar. His writings affected the English revolution of 1688 and even influenced other philosophers such as Thomas Paine who instigated the French revolution.²⁴ In Nigeria during the Nigerian/Biafra Civil war, Professor Wole Soyinka challenged the conscience of the world on the Igbo plight which earned him a prison gift of almost three years. He wrote a book entitled '*And the Man Died*' to express and amplify further the tragedy that Biafra as an ideology has become. Today, after over forty-six years we have seen groups such as MASSOB, NDA and IPOB challenging the Nigerian state on the need for a Biafran state and Niger Delta Republic. Resources have been wasted to combat the activities of these groups and the slogan of One Nigeria is beginning to serve other purposes and carries no meaning to many groups in the old Eastern Nigeria. Unfortunately, political profligacy and political buccaneers that have occupied the center stage have stolen so much that our youths are convinced that they have no future. This primitive accumulation of wealth took place because history as a discipline and indeed humanities was no longer anything relevant to the political leadership. Imagine the EFCC digging out billions of naira in an Abuja farm hidden by our politicians!!²⁵

In an atmosphere of violence France could not join the industrial revolution early enough because of internal political and economic problems.²⁶ In Nigeria, the belief for change may have come with pipeline vandalisation, abuse of rule of law, and brutal wickedness of owing civil servants for seven to eight months and aged pensioners for two years in Abia, Imo, Ekiti, Oyo, Osun and Ondo states. Yet none of the leaders of these states can claim not

to have received regular monthly allocations. In the euphoria of the Freedom of Information Act (Fol), the names of political criminals who returned stolen monies to the Federal Government are yet to be made public. It is not impossible that revealing these names would be a measure of deterrence to looters of tomorrow. Critical thinking and analysis that is the core of the Humanities would have informed this but this is not to be. This means that there is everything wrong with the psychology of political leadership in Nigeria.

Harnessing our Potentials for Development

In Ghana during the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghanaian Airline and a Shipping line known as Black Star were established, factories were built, the Volta Dam was constructed and agriculture was encouraged. The kangaroo National Liberation Council that removed Nkrumah from power sold the Ghanaian rubber plantation to Firestone Company of America who also bought the rubber plantation of Liberia.²⁷ In Nigeria, the Murtala Mohammed administration turned British Petroleum to African Petroleum perhaps in his bid to show the world that we are free. The result was an alleged western-engineered coup d' etat that terminated his life just as Walter Rodney was bombed for keeping the Guyanese government on its toes and perhaps for writing *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*; a massive documentation on Euro-African relations. The point being buttressed is that no assistance can come to Africa from the western world without enormous strings attached. There are many cases that support this viewpoint. For example, during the Colonial era, the Awka smiths were able to construct guns and other weapons and even fabricated European keys. And as a way of checkmating that technological ingenuity, a law known as Gun Ordinance was promulgated to prohibit the manufacturing of guns, yet the importation of fire arms continued unabated including the importation of gin/spirits at the expense of legislating against the brewing of local gin.

During the Nigerian/Biafra Civil War of 1967-1970, Ojukwu's claim that no power in black Africa can defeat Biafra was justified by immeasurable technological attainments

exhibited in Biafra in the quest for the territorial defence of their sovereignty. So many years after the war, no keen interest was devoted in terms of harnessing the potentials of these Biafra scientists yet there was no victor no vanquish. As part of its deliberate attempt, efforts to teach about the Nigerian Civil War in schools have been frustrated by policy makers in the country. Should the Humanities also be involved in de-memorializing humanity as against advancing same? In agriculture, no genuine effort in eastern Nigeria has been put in place by successive regimes in the constituting states to sustain the agricultural master plan of Dr. Micheal Okpara. Going by historical accounts documented by the likes of Equiano and Achebe, we are still farming the way our ancestors did (non-mechanized farming). To make agriculture attractive simply requires mechanization. Why is Nigeria still importing flours for baking when there is cassava, cocoyam and yam in abundance to serve as credible alternative? In Humanities, Music and theatre are essential ingredients of foreign policy and protest. We can easily recall the excellent lyrics of Majek Fashek, late Ras Kimono, Oritz Williki, Fela Anikulapo Kuti just to mention but few. Today, our home videos have grown as well as our music, yet no lyrical content and story line is being presented. Issues of imperialism, slavery, and history, can occupy the center stage of our home video industry which is now receiving wider viewership and subscription. Yet the film sector is promoting mundane story lines depicting mere savagery, immorality and fetishism.

Strengthening Humanities Education in Nigeria

Like one report rightly suggested, Universities and research institutions can take the lead by making their websites more informative about their staff, about their scholarship and about its potential relevance to development goal.²⁷ This is one area scholarship in humanities appear to be suffering serious setback. Many academics in the universities appear to have no keen research interest except publishing for promotion yet they are quick in retiring home each day as if nightfall is anti-academic. This was aptly captured by Olaopa that there is the absence of human capital development to the effect that:

The first condition of making government to work for the good of Nigerians is to recognize how the human capital development dynamics function. While the founding document in this regard is the National Policy on Education (NPE), the human capital development 'industries' are the various institutions of tertiary education in the country, beginning with the universities. Between the NPE and the institutions of tertiary education, it is clear that something is fundamentally wrong with Nigeria's capacity to harness the competences of the graduates that are churned out yearly.²⁸

Conclusion: What Can we Do?

The Federal Government of Nigeria should declare state of emergency in the education sector. A new educational policy that would increase and redirect our perception of the Humanities should be put in place. Grants for research in Humanities should be made available as no development in science can take place outside the humanities. The various forms of policies laden with mediocrity which encourage policies such as Educationally Disadvantaged States and quota system should visit a policy surgeon. Significantly, 'we must unquestionably increase the prestige of the humanities and the flow of funds to them. At the same time, however grave the need, we must safeguard the independence, the originality, and the freedom of expression of all who are concerned with liberal learning. Very importantly, let's consider the views expressed by Jason M Kelley:

Scholars in the arts and humanities need to create a critical taxonomy of the structures of ideology, authority, and power in which they currently operate...Scholars in the arts and humanities should examine their role

in the community ecology and identify where they could be more deeply embedded. The arts and humanities sectors would be well served if they could articulate how essential they are to a healthy community...In order to be embedded more deeply, universities must focus on encouraging the public arts and humanities. This means that they need a better system of assessing and awarding public scholarship on one hand. On the other hand, scholars need to become more self-conscious, aware and self-critical of their role in encouraging or stifling public engagement within their institutions.²⁹

Humanities research must increase its presence in gender studies, medicine, public policy, and other areas conservative academics think the humanities has no business. There is no better way of concluding this lecture than taking an elaborate look on what Professor Oyeweso advised:

Scholarship in the Humanities in Nigeria has its peculiar challenges especially in the contexts of the worsening crises of underdevelopment, nation building and globalization. Scholars in the humanities possess skills and knowledge that are valuable in contemporary world. However, deploying these unique skills in the service of mankind in this ever changing world requires pragmatism and not dogmatism on the part of Nigerian scholars in the humanities. This is no time to be cocooned and oblivious of developments in other

parts of the world. The Nigerian humanities scholar of today cannot afford to be provincial in his scope or methodology. Indeed, this paper asserts that this is the era of digital humanities. There must be fruitful dialogues between the sciences, the technologies and the humanities. Newly emerging interdisciplinary fields such as bio-humanities, medical humanities, forensic linguistics and computational linguistics must also be explored if the humanistic disciplines are to remain relevant in the contemporary age...the foregoing is *sine qua non* for a better repositioning of the humanities scholarship in Nigeria.³⁰

As education has become increasingly more interdisciplinary, 'collaborative Humanities' that is receptive and accommodative to new ideas and information should be pursued and adhered to by Humanities scholars if the fortunes and public perception of our field must improve. And the government must necessarily discontinue promoting policies that essentially keep the Humanities down in its creative agenda to consign the field to perpetual irrelevance.

Notes

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3. American Academy of Arts and Sciences, The State of the Humanities: Funding 2014, www.humanitiesindicators.org, accessed 8th July 2016

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