

The Role of History, Historiography and Historian in Nation Building

Kabir Mohammed

*Department Of History and Strategic Studies Faculty of Arts, Management and Social Sciences
Federal University, Dutsin-Ma, P.M.B 5001, Katsina State.*

ABSTRACT: *Some scholars outside historical scholarship view history as a past, that only has relevance when it is needed or 'past' that should totally be forgotten. Such people see these academic disciplines as archaic if not completely useless. Others hold it in low esteem. This may not only be seen as misconception of history, as a process and discipline, it has as well affected the unity, progress, peace and harmony of our beloved country and has as a result generated mutual mistrust, inter religious and communal conflicts among Nigerian diverse nationalities. Past studies conducted have proved that the 1985 Kafanchan, Tafawa Balewa, and Plateau/Jos religious crises, Shagamu communal conflict, the Asaba, Ogomi and the Niger Delta Militant issue to mention just a few, were all devastating and had fundamentally occurred following the failure to understand histories of the past, which claimed that in the past there were both relative peace, intergroup relations, good governance, general security to life and property. The study also examines the concept of history as a discipline, a science and a process of change, the term historiography, position of a historian and their tremendous contributions in nation building project. At the tail end, problems confronting historical studies, historian and centres for historical research and documentation have been highlighted and the study has in the same vein suggested a way forward.*

I. INTRODUCTION

For a better understanding of the focus of the study it is important to note that it is an attempt to relate the past with the present Nigerian economic, social, political and religious conditions aimed at understanding the fact that the role of history, historiography and historian in nation building cannot be over emphasized. Historical studies have rightly pointed out that pre-colonial Nigerian societies were more accommodative, peaceful, tolerant, sincere, humane and sympathetic compared to post colonial Nigerian people and their societies. For instance, today in Nigeria, indigene/settler problem/dichotomy has become one of the major serious challenges facing Nigeria. It is against this background the study seeks to justify that if Nigerian history could objectively be explored, reinterpreted, reconstructed, compiled, documented and carefully studied, free of socio-cultural and religious sentiments. Nigerians would have experienced a progressive, politically stable, just, dynamic, strongly united and egalitarian society that will completely be out of insecurity to life and property in general.

Furthermore, a scholar in person of P.J. Shea has even opined that “*Every person has a history, the more and the better we understand all these histories the better we shall all be*”. He views it this way, peace, unity, progress and nations building may best be achieved under the pretext of historical awareness, which deals with the conscious of the events that happen around. In a nutshell, this study of ours is of the opinion that a proper understanding and the use of the good historical lessons derived is one of the ways forward for Nigeria. By responding to the call, there shall also be special pride to national identity, proper position to national integration, sense of belonging and thus enhance nation-building project. It should further be understood that history as a process, discipline and science, historiography and historian are both interwoven and greatly help in nation building project.

II. THE CONCEPTS OF HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the first place many definitions have been put forward at explaining the term ‘History’ as an academic course of study. To some people it is a branch of knowledge that deals with the past. Furthermore, another group of people defined history as a transformation of society in time and space.¹ But the academic definitions differently presented by eminent scholars such as Y.B. Usman, K.O. Dike and P.J. Shea have both made us to understand history as a parasite and holistic course of study. For instance Y.B. Usman in his scholarly work argues that history is all about the totality of human existence overtime.² P.J. Shea defines history as all about causality, effect, change, facts and evidence. To M.D. Suleiman, it is all about activities of man in time perspective, i.e what was done, being done and would be done. In other words, the past present and the future.³ for C.C. Ifemeje History as a body of knowledge about the past, especially the past of the act of man in society consists of facts ascertained through honest inquiry as well as influence, interpretations and

generalizations arrived at by the historian and are available in the form of true record on paper or in the memory of man. The last but not the least of the definition of History, to an Arab Historian in the person of Ziauddeen Sardar opines that:

To justify the study of History is to understand history as the sum of happenings, the totality of human experiences as a way in which facts are selected, verified, described and analyzed. It is also involves the selection of facts, the words, the styles, the accents, the imposed logic, the footnotes all bear the impress of the individual historian and his milieu and are combined to promote a particular image of the past.⁴

III. THE CONCEPT OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

Erim in his analysis of the two related concepts history and historiography argues that this historiography itself is a discipline dealing with the methods of writing history and the techniques of the historical research and documentation. This makes it clear for the understanding of history as an organized and critical study of the past happenings as had produced sufficient effects on subsequent course of events or other human beings in the course of events. Similarly, Afigbo views historiography “*as the science of writing history*” and others including Dike and Ajayi view historiography as

The discovery and critical assessments of historical sources, next is the reconstruction and description of the past on the basis of facts available and to a large extent involved to allocate, conscientize, the society, or even assist in influencing aspects of contemporary public opinion, action or policy and the reflection on trends and the patterns of historical writing.⁵

In any case, it is equally important to note that historiography is very holistic and critical in nature. Therefore, it is only a balanced historian can conveniently encompass it’s afore mentioned components.

IV. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORY

The word justification on the surface implies having a concrete reasons and evidences as regards why something exists or is done. In other words, means an explanation of why a particular thing should be done. In view of the basic reasons why we study history; this has made many scholars to argue that history is a process which involves interaction between man and man, man and his environment, man and the cosmic world, ever since the emergence of human societies which is still unfolding and has a time dimension. History as a process is defined as the conscious attempt to systematically study the process of events through the aid of sources. However, this portrays that the major goal of history is to justify human curiosity and provide the society with the opportunity to know itself better in respect of the past events, societies and cultures. One of the major role of history in nation building is the reconstruction of record of the activities of man on earth, his religion, politics, economy, long existed inter group-relations, commercial contact and other aspects of human life. To a large extent, it is concerned with the study and reconstruction of the history of how and why change in the past, for the conscious transformation of the present in order to secure a meaningful future, moreover, conceptualized as the study of change for change.⁶

Many historical studies conducted have proved that Thucydedes account of his method and purpose in writing his history, had made an impression upon even non-historians, which has never been effected. He had shown enormous pains in collecting and collating his evidence and has in general added the result; so far from commending his work to the casual reader; may prove positively distasteful to him, because it bars out the pleasures of romancing. What further in respect of his historical write-ups motivate people until today to develop interest in historical scholarship is his precise and comprehensive methods of justification. For he views human experience repeats itself; that the future will be the past, and that consequently it is only by ascertaining accurately the courses not even the course of past events, that we may equip ourselves to future problems for the sake of nation building.⁷ He further argues that ‘Truths’ so established can not be as showy as fictions, but rather represent a solid gain to humanity for all time i.e past, present and future in general.

Furthermore, well grounded and historians such as D.W. Robertson and J. Higharm here both agreed and emphasized that the study of history enriches human experiences, develops power of thinking and also generates new ideas that greatly contribute in nation building. They further opine that it is historical scholarship that promotes mutual understanding, as a result of understanding of the past.⁸ An indication to this is the properly reconstructed and documented history of Greenbarg’s *Classification of African Languages* which clearly shows the early existing tribal relationship between certain African languages, most especially the category of Kwa-sub-group, Congo-Kordofanian and Nilo Saharan.⁹

The major role of historical sources in investigating, interpreting, reconstructing and understanding of the past event cannot be ignored. Prior to the examination of some of these sources, it is interesting to present scholars opinion as regards the position of history, Ibn Khaldun opines that the inevitability of change in the society involving the rise and fall of great empires, after attaining their full-life-circle. From the foregoing, it can

be argued that the only thing that is permanent in history is change and such change can be gradual, rapid or revolutionary. Baradough views history as reconstruction based on fragmentary evidence, the significant things about the past.

This clearly points out that it is not everything or every event of the past, that is being studied, but only those that have significant effects on subsequent course of events. On the other hand E.H. Carr states that history is the continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts and an unending dialogue between the past and present.¹⁰

The major sources that greatly contribute in making an examined historical event a reality include, geography, linguistic, oral traditions, primary and secondary sources, and archeological sources, their importance in tracing an event, understanding and writing of history cannot be over-emphasized. Geography and history are interwoven, the word 'Geo' (From the Greek means "earth" and "graphics" to write). Geography enables a historian to relate man with his physical environment at past stages of evolution, for it provides information regarding the patterns of settlement, economic development, rain, vegetation, wind and topography for historical examination, interpretation and construction.

Linguistic also as an essential source of historical data collection, this involves a way, in which ideas, emotions and desires are communicated. It clearly makes the understanding of societies possible most especially, if a study could be carried out under the pretext of comparative linguistics, dialectology or lexicon. This involved a way in which ideas, emotions and desires are communicated.¹¹ For oral sources/traditions it is a testimony transmitted verbally from one generation to another. This portrays that the message must be oral statements spoken, song, or called out on musical instrument. However, prior to the invention of writing, oral sources served as means of preserving and transmitting history. Similarly, primary and secondary sources are both referred to as written documents, known as inscriptions. The inscriptions include: paper, wood, stone, leather and leaf. But written documents include: diaries, letters, memos, periodicals, annual reports, biographies, travelers accounts, correspondence, official and private minutes of various dealings, statistics and agreements they will provide information for documentation.¹² The last but not the least of the sources is archaeology which involves excavation, discovery and interpretation of the material remains. The discovered remains are called artifacts. The methods used in the explanation of the artifacts found is interdisciplinary and based on multi-faceted approaches and wide variety of sources.¹³

Furthermore, V.H. Galbraith views history as the past, the qualification is important, archaeological, remains public achieves and private papers, perhaps even old histories are not today, strictly speaking history. To him, they are the raw materials of history, the stuff of history.¹⁴ History, then is made by the historian who has not merely to continue it with the lapse of time, but increasingly to remake it. Ideally, every historical scholar and student should in some measure make his own history, that is he should study the raw materials, the sources. To these (traditionally divided into two categories of records and chronicles) and the fact that histories have made of them. Studies conducted have shown that there is a well marked stage in the development of civilization at which men and government pass from the oral to the written record in the transaction of business. Anglo saxon history for instance preserved genealogies of the kings right back to woden. These no doubts, began as oral records and the same is true of the earliest land-books or charters. Such documents which arose from time to time.¹⁵

V. IN DEFENSE OF HISTORICAL SCHOLARSHIP

P.J. Shea opines that in the academic history of the United States of America no matter the type of discipline one needs to study. He/she must include history as a subsidiary course for the understanding of the national history of America (American Civic History). To Dahiru 'History is parasitical' as it depends on other disciplines for consumption, which subsequently brings about proper construction, interpretation and analysis of events.¹⁶ Similarly, the contributions of historical studies to the intellectual growth and development of other disciplines has also made Naniya to argue that in the early part of the 17th century, there were only three academic disciplines found in operation, namely, Geometry, history and natural sciences (modern pure sciences).¹⁷ Studies have further proved that it is history that traces the origin, growth development and founding fathers of other disciplines. For example, the history of science, technology and society clearly states that Abu Musa Alkwarizmi was a recognized scholar of mathematics, famous Muslim scientists included; Abu Musa, Jabir Ibn Hiayab (Chemistry), Ibn Yunus (Astronomy), Al-Razi and Ibn Sina (Avicenna), (Medicines) Ibn al-Hadith (Physics) and Omar Khayyum (Mathematics). In a nutshell, this aims at portraying the relationship and academic role of history to the development of arts, social sciences and scientific courses respectively.¹⁸

History as an academic discipline concerned with the study of conducts of the things that men and women in the past have done why they did them and what were the fundamental causes and impact?. It is logic and psychology shown in action and ethics, for any analysis of conduct without a scale of values, by which to assess it, implied or stated is are best sub-human. Man can be studied in mass, but not in the abstract, for it is unforgettable that the mass is made up of men and that *varium etmutabile semper homo!* Moreover, in the purely

political sphere, without some knowledge of the past the present becomes unintelligible. And so as each problem comes up for solution to most of our societal conflict and religious intolerance (peace negotiation). The study of history makes the world intelligible. Not only that but it also makes people historically minded. History is not static, it is inexhaustible and constantly changes. The major problem associated with the study of history is the immensity of its scope. There is nothing on earth or in the heavens without its history, even the stars have their courses and sometimes disappear. Darwin, in particular looked for history in geology and earth worms before he discerned the descent or ascent of man and natural history takes precedence of the past politics' which free man identified with history and every particular science has its own particular history. The scope of history has no limit, as it embraces the entire world, thousand of years and endless energies.¹⁹

Certainly, it is interesting to note that the greatest achievements of man, have been his faculty of thought, then of speech, then of writing, and then of printing, which spread over every field of human activity all the sciences, languages and arts, histories, ancient medieval and modern, ecclesiastical, political, constitutional, military, navel, exploration, the history of literatures, economics, diplomacy, music, astronomy, engineering, local and social history and lastly the mastery of the air. The crux in the study of history is its bondless range. The fundamental basis of the value of history is that the past has made the present and the present alone can make the future. We cannot even understand our immediate world without knowledge of the past and the further we delve into history the deeper and broader will be our grasp of the present and insight into the future.²⁰ The past can never be undone but can be redeemed at times and then with blood and sweats and tears. History is also the most humane of the humaner studies. No human sympathy is required or produced by the study of geology, mineralogy, physics, economics and chemistry. Biology and anatomy do, indeed, rise to the level of man, but only as an animal. History therefore, is the highest form of sciences because its subject matter is the highest work of nature.²¹

In view of the above, our study argues that if history cannot be regarded as a science,, it is only because it is too complex and too human to lend itself to those summary methods of treatment by axioms, rules and formulae which are commonly treated as tests of scientific truth. For A.H. Pollard imagination and sympathy are both essential and we must show what men and women "thought and felt" in the past without that insight, history is but a tale informed by an idiot. Nor is the study of history of much value if it is confined to the student alone, without communication to anyone else by the written or spoken word. Most of the great historians – Thucydides, Xenophon, Tacitus, Polybius, Gibbon, Hume, Lecky, E.H Car and Froude, wrote history, but did not teach it by word of mouth. Their scholarly works followed them and provided ample means for the study of history by others. Bury, on the other hand averred that "history must be studied as if it has no reference" it should be borne in mind that knowledge of whatever sort is power and crucial to the survival of man and his society and knowledge is the general purpose of education from the most elementary stages upwards.²²

VI. HISTORY AS A SCIENCE

The common conception of science involves the motion of accurate formulae, known as natural laws, giving accurate results derivable from these principles and this entails the criticism that as human action is infinitely variable, no certain result can contained in a study established upon it. This theory seeks to confine history to narrative and refuse any attempt to discover any principles behind the drama. In pure sciences, scientist are aware of the limitations of their invariable, laws and of the defects of their methods, and if they were to endeavour to exclude history from the sciences, they would probably base their exclusion upon the statement that the laws of human conduct are so imperfectly known that the methods employed in discussing them must be widely different from that they are accustomed to employ. And yet economics, psychology and anthropology have one by one crept into the guarded circle, and if is difficult to state that history will not follow them and that historians may not look to their logic and try to establish their general principles as eagerly and as accurately as any other students. In any case, the determinist be left to the dominion of incalculable chance. Even where the action of individual is incalculable, the action of the crowd may have a common direction and common aim. Buckle an erudite scholar who was described as the protagonist of all those historians and politicians of the past, who appealed to the known laws of history to support their own theories and to repel those of their opponents. Unaware like the men of his time, of the historians of natural laws in such studies as chemistry or physics he attempted to extend to history the certainty which he attributed to the other sciences. His work is ingenious, brilliant and perverse. But he never knew that before historians argue from the past, they must discover it.²³

The last but not the least is that the long prevailed intellectual arguments that history is a science can only be regarded as an inverse science; its adherents are continually employed in reasoning from what they know and see before them, to what they have never known and never can see. Whereas, in the case of all inverse sciences, it can be found that problems are capable of many solutions and the selection of the right answer from the many possible answers is at once the difficulty and the delight of the historians. In a nutshell, the historian from a set of facts presented to his consciousness, he is compiled to work backwards to a preceding set of facts

which is purely hypothetical. The number of possible solutions in history is indefinite, the selection of the most acceptable one is the peculiar task to which he dooms himself, because history is an hypothesis to account for the existence of facts as they are.²⁴

VII. THE HISTORIAN AND HIS FUNCTIONS

For a better understanding of an individual refers to as a historian, it would also be more appropriate to examine the nature of the task ahead of him. A historian is a specialist trained on the techniques to handle sources and ask critical questions such as why, how and with what form of academic justification and so forth. In historian's attempt to reconstruct the past, he does this because history is distinct from fiction, story telling or literature. Historian also evaluates sources to establish authenticity and reliability of the information obtained, this is because all sources are suspects until proved otherwise.²⁵

The identification of the followings are also parts of the duties expected to accordingly be discharged by the historian.

- The identification of the informant's position in the society, his qualification, sincerity and credibility. The identification of how knowledgeable the informant is as regards the areas of inquiry.
- The identification and ability to wipe out biases and prejudices prior to reconstruction of the event under historical research.
- The identification, adoption and application of multi-disciplinary approach for successful completion of the study carried out.
- Identify the world outlook of the recorder of events.
- Is the informant a participant to the event being discussed?²⁶

Furthermore, it is also a duty for a historian to criticize, cross check and review every document prior to writing. He should as well ensure to put these components into consideration appropriateness of the subject matter, title, organization of materials, academic language, quality, originality of argument, depth or research and how contributory a particular event is to the knowledge of the field. E.H Car argues that objectivity in history cannot be objectivity of facts as postulated by those who favour objectivism but only of the relations between facts and interpretations, between the past, present and the future. He further opined that historian's background should be studied prior to studying his book. For Smith insists on having biographical information about the author. In fact, there are critical reappraisal of the fact that the historian's world outlook, nationality, class and religion, may have the tendency to influence his interpretation of the historical process and his reconstruction of history. This is because every writing has a purpose, goal and interest. Similarly, Eitel states that "*knowledge is not striven.... But rather serves as a difficult world, for the implementation of one's own interest*". Indeed, even Fukuyama's *End of History* has an interest behind it.²⁷

In view of the functions of a historian and the role expected to play, a scholar in person of J. Higham in his work titled: *The Historian as Moral Critic*; states that

The historian in order to be really creative, should live a double life. He is expected as far as his work is concerned to be a full knowledgeable member of the present and at the same time. Be faithful...to the integrity of age gone by.....to feeble an involvement in the life of the present makes for a slack and routine grasp of the past.²⁸

Similarly, D.W Robertson in his scholarly work puts it this way:

if we relate the contents of the sources we are using to the values of time instead of those of the age of the documents, we are universalizing an attitude peculiar to our own age as if that attitude is a platonic reality....and by so doing we fail to learn what is in that age, we cannot understand from our own age.²⁹

The above two scholars emphasize the importance of time, chronology, the genuineness of the document and how historian should interact with the available sources in interpreting an event for historical reconstruction. E.H Car has in addition viewed the functions of the historian as "*is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from it but to master and understand it as key to the understanding of the present.*" However, R.B. Collingwood argues that what gives the historian his criterion for imaginary picture of the past event as self dependent, self determining and self justifying form of thought based on his experience. He further stated that it is ideas, views, beliefs, that direct action and not action directing events. Similarly, thoughts, mind, re-enactment, rethinking, recollection and constructive imaginations are critical terms in Collingwood's philosophy of history.

For G.B Clough in justifying the study of history and the position of a historian states that "*every thinking man and woman today, who seeks an answer to the modern world, turns inevitably to the past hoping to discover history a clue to modern trends and tendencies*". Similarly Y.B Usman a famous scholar, patriotic

Nigerian, human activist, epitome of academic excellence, radical scholar, master of sharp words and a well grounded historian, in his analysis of historical scholarship argues that *“In this country, people are not so much against theory, knowledge and learning in themselves but against the truth that these reveal”*. This scholar is well known national and international levels before his death, for his thoroughness, depth and high standard of excellence in his researches and writings on the state of Nigerian society and history. Y.B. Usman’s conception of history portrays that knowledge, its foundation, theory and learning came into light through historical scholarship.³⁰

The Role of History in Overcoming Indigene Settler Phenomenon/Diacotomy and the Quest for Nation Building

This is one of the Nigerian problems that represents a significant dimension of the National Question in Nigeria. Substantial attention is drawn to this problem in view of the current waves of conflict processes and undue savagery, these conflicts have unleashed especially in many of our urban centres, towns and cities today which have recorded a plethora of histories of mass destruction of lives and properties. The latest cases of these conflicts in Nigerian area, included; the 1982 Kafanchan/Kaduna religious crisis, Yola in 1984, Gombe in 1986, Zaria in 1987, the Plateau/Jos 2001 religious crisis taking place until today, the Asaba, Ogoni and Niger Delta crises, to mention but a few, out of many that had occurred in Nigerian area.³¹

The fundamental causes of the Nigerian crises, are mostly issues associated with political, economic, tribalism, ethnic complexities, religious differences, stereotype, the irreconcilable nature of Nigerian indigeneship quagmire, struggle for scarce resource, the question of equality of right of citizens, the nature under which Nigeria emerged, as a political unit/entity, individual and class interests, rapid urbanization, unemployment, fear of domination or endangerment and survival as a people and stiff competition among groups, absence of strong national feeling as one nation, one people are the basic problems causing indigene settler conflicts in most parts of Nigeria. In view of the above pointed principles causes of conflicts in Nigeria, historical studies conducted have shown that it was the outbreak of these conflicts that necessitated Historians including Y.B Usman, Mahadi, Kenneth Dike and C.N. Uba in particular to have themselves fully engaged in understanding the basic needs, aspirations, goals and objectives of the affected Nigerian societies for solutions to be proffered. It should consequently be borne in mind that the sum of such their historical write-ups on communal and religious conflicts have shown that prior to colonial conquest of Nigeria there were mutual trust, cordial relations, inter tribal marriage found in operation as a result of the long established social and commercial contacts between pre-colonial Nigerian tribes unlike post-colonial Nigeria in contrast.³²

Problems Confronting the Study of History, Historiography and Historian in Modern Nigeria:

Generally, History, Historiography, Historians and students in general lack moral and financial motivations from the authority concerned to enable them satisfy their long term intellectual commitments. Moreso, important historical sites and centres for historical research, particularly National Archives, Arewa House, National Museums and monuments, Kaduna and Nigerian states History and Culture Bureaus and their serving staff have been partially ignored without any incentives.³³

By contrast the historian of the recent past finds himself faced with a superabundance of written material, but he too has much to learn from the distinctive approaches developed by his fellows in the fields of social anthropology, political science, economics, and geography. The general historian can not in particular afford to neglect any illuminating approach to an understanding of human society. Furthermore, the problem of bias, has today become fashionable for contemporary historiographers and historians in general, in their historical writings to assert that they are entirely “Objective”, or in other words, they are concerned to write a truly “Scientific History”. Studies have shown that for a general historian to make such claim would be absurd. This is because he may not feel himself consciously affected by any well defined ideology, but in dealing with a subject of such complexity as the history of the country, a period, or a continent, he is constantly having to make choices, stressing this fact/point ignoring that on this necessary process of selection the inescapable pressures of time and place exert a powerful influence.³⁴

Furthermore, the historian should not entirely divest himself of the perceptions bred of his own background culture. Whatever historian’s nationality, he is likely to find it easier to establish a certain rapport with the sentiments of his compatriots, than with the views expressed by peoples of other cultures. For example, as devout Muslim historian, he may presumably find it impossible to examine the world clearly through the eyes of Christian historian or animist at large. If he is a congenital rebel, he may lack the capacity to feel much sympathy for the revolutionaries, the misfits, and the apparent failures of the world. A historian also places himself in the position of the men and women whose lives, he is concerned to study. Compassion as a concept does not necessarily mean pity, nor does it as a word involve approval. Any historian who accepts the virtue of compassion may well feel that he is always in the position of the defending counsel not of the prosecuting attorney and never of the hanging judge.³⁵

VIII. A WAY FORWARD

The Nigerian three tiers of government should endeavour to revisit the pre-colonial type of inter group relations found in operation among various Nigerian ethnic groups. In the same vein, the study of history even at subsidiary level should be made compulsory for each and every Nigerian University student for the understanding of Nigerian ethnic groups, culture, beliefs, norms, values, and histories in general. It should be borne in mind that if this successfully included in the Nigerian educational curriculum certainly there would be better Nigeria as far as peaceful co-existence, mutual trust and sense of belongings are concerned. It is of course through these concerted efforts, the need for the inculcation of right attitudes, morality and patriotism into the hearts of contemporary Nigerian youths could be attained for the development of our beloved nation.

The problem of nonchalant attitudes of the Nigerian government as the study rightly pointed out should be tackled for the furtherance of knowledge on historical scholarship. The knowledge derived from historical research as regards the past and present Nigerian history should be utilized properly documented and studied for nation building. The last but not the least, both the study of history as an academic discipline, historiography, and historian should morally and financially be supported by the government, stake holders and non governmental organizations.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study has whole heartedly and unreservedly examined the meaning of the concepts of History, Historiography and Historian and their major contributions to the development of Nigeria as a nation. It has further suggested that historical scholarship is the most essential ingredient that moves a country and its citizens forward through the understanding of the past for comparison with the present, even the future at large. The study has also viewed it that most of the Nigerian ethnic and religious conflicts have occurred, and still happen as a result of the Nigerian elites failure to understand Nigerian people, culture, pre-colonial, commercial and religious relationships under the pretext of historical studies. In view of the problems identified as obstacles currently facing historian, historical studies, historiography and centres for historical research such as National archives, museum and monuments, the study has in respect of this proffered ways forward.

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