



## **REIMAGINING HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES IN A DIGITAL AGE**

*Being*

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**By**

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### **Introduction**

It is my pleasure to be invited to be one of the guest speakers of this International Conference on the theme: ***Reimagining Humanities and Sciences in a Digital Age***. I thank the organizers of this conference for considering me fit to take up the task of a guest speaker. In particular, I salute Prof. Ngozi Nnamani who is the director of the General Studies Division at Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu and her collaborators. I recognize that ESUT has a Vice Chancellor, Prof. Aloysius Michael Okolie. I greet him and his theme.

I am only going to do an analysis of the theme of our International Conference: ***Reimagining Humanities and Sciences in a Digital Age***. The reason for this is that in my thinking, there are many rich meanings in every item that make up the theme. Each of these items needs comprehensive and thorough research investigations that will free it from any ambiguity. The clearer each item is, the easier its explanations become. The result is a succinct understanding of the theme of the conference. But before I take on each item for investigation, I think it pertinent to make some statement of the problems facing humanities as an academic discipline in Nigerian Universities and elsewhere.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Humans today live in a divisive globalism, hazardous environments, good but dangerous science and technological growth. Yet, it can be observed that human society consists not only of these material tragedies. For this reason, Humanities as an academic discipline are called to make meaning out of these challenges facing the world<sup>1</sup>. In Nigeria, humanities face serious issues, such as insufficient acceptance and recognition in comparison with science courses. Parents of the contemporary Nigerian societies prefer courses with foundations in science, technology,

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. A. CLASSEN., “The Challenges of the Humanities, Past, Present, and Future”, in *Humanities* Vol. 3, no. 1, 2013, 1 – 18.



engineering, mathematics, medicine, etc., for their children in the Universities. One reason this is so is that, most Nigerian parents think that science courses provide enough financial success to their children after graduation<sup>2</sup>. This line of reasoning is currently in vogue as many Nigerian trained nurses and midwives take solace in the United Kingdom. Research finding reveals that more than 15,000 Nigerian nurses and midwives presently work in the United Kingdom. About the same number work in the United States of America, Canada, Saudi Arabia and other parts of the globe. Nurses and midwives who practice their profession in foreign countries earn huge sums of money in foreign currency. It has been confirmed through oral interviews that a nurse in the United Kingdom could earn as much as £70,000 to £115,000 annually. Materially considered, earning such an amount annually turns the ambitions of those involved in nursing and midwives into tangible and rewarding careers. This huge amount of money further provides incentives to many young people in Nigeria to want to study nursing and midwifery in their University first degrees. With this kind of situation, Humanities courses are relegated to the sand. They do not offer job opportunities after University studies, so they are not considered relevant.

Another grave problem affecting academic humanities is that of the Government investing very little interest in funding Universities in Nigeria. There is therefore a low level of Government funding, which leads to ineffective transmission of knowledge to students. The question of initiating deep-seated research in any field and effective teaching and supervision of students' thesis are now a thing of the past. Low level of Government funding breeds economic and financial pressures on universities. This is the reason why there is a hike in tuition fees, accommodation, and other unidentifiable grounds to extort money from students. Government low level funding obviously affects the development and interest in academic humanities in Nigerian Universities. Many Nigerian Universities are slow to be involved in promoting them in their curriculum of studies.

One observes that there are too many imperfections in the development of curriculum of studies in Nigerian Universities. The contemporary Nigerian culture celebrates imperfections, they are a plus rather than a problem<sup>3</sup>. The shocking discovery in Nigerian imperfections is that they are deliberate almost all the time. No wonder then there are explicit imperfections in three broad areas of curriculum development in Nigeria. Christiana Nwadiokwunames these three areas as, curriculum planning and development, curriculum implementation, evaluation and supervision<sup>4</sup>. Curriculum planning and development are geared toward satisfying the

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. M. NUSSBAUM., *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2016, ix.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. C. KELLY., – J. KEMPER., – E. RUTTEN., (eds.), *Imperfections: Studies in Mistakes, Flaws, and Failures*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2023, 2.

<sup>4</sup>C. NWADIOKWU., “Challenges and Prospects of Curriculum Development in Nigeria”, in *Journal of Pristine*, Vol. 1, 2018, 29 – 36, at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/382879760>, accessed 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025.



interest of students' learning and development<sup>5</sup>. To arrive at this target, teachers and students should participate, starting from the scratch to the final draft of any curriculum of studies<sup>6</sup>. In Nigeria, the reverse is the case. Teachers do not take part in the development and planning of academic curriculum. Students' involvement is totally ruled out. Curriculum implementation is putting into concrete practice the agreed plan found in a developed curriculum of studies. Implementation here means, helping students to acquire both knowledge and experience. The "designed courses are translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to students"<sup>7</sup> during lecture. The situation in Nigeria reveals that students are not aware of their academic curriculum development and why they should study in order to learn a particular course. This suggests that the planned and developed curriculum does not align with the set out objectives that are meant to be visible in the classroom setting<sup>8</sup>.Curricular implementations are wrongly done due to i) insufficient number of experts to implement the curriculum effectively, ii) lack of infrastructural facilities, as regulations stipulated are not heeded to, and no one seems to be supervising the implementation process. In a nutshell, curriculum planning and development are not interactive. They are not in a good grade to reactivate students' intellects. Evaluation is built on a summary of the whole learning process and some decisions are made to benefit students' learning. Supervision is like mentoring, coaching and forming students for them to improve their stages of learning<sup>9</sup>. Evaluation and supervision are rarely mentioned in Nigerian circumstances. They are already not existing as a necessary end point for curriculum planning and development.

The other problem militating against humanities in many Nigerian Universities is that they lack philosophical foundation of thought. Philosophy occupies a central place in any planning, development, implementation, supervision and evaluation of academic curriculum. It is the base from which an ideology of education (educational ideology) emerges. Any curriculum that is worth it builds on a philosophical framework that has its end goal in praxis. The philosophical basis of the contents of curriculum of studies is not explicit in some Nigerian Universities. I am not sure if there is any philosophy that is at the base of the contemporary Nigerian societies, and as such, the

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. C. B. MYERS., "Divergence in Learning Goal Priorities Between College Students and Their Faculty: Implications for Teaching and Learning", in *Journal of College Teaching*, Vol. 56, 2008, 53 – 58.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. C. B. MYERS., "53-58 Myers Win 08.indd", 2007, at

<https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:210115420>, accessed 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

<sup>7</sup>S. BEDIAKO., "Models and Concepts of Curriculum Implementation: Some Definitions and Influence of Implementation", at

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333338710\\_Models\\_and\\_concepts\\_of\\_curriculum](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333338710_Models_and_concepts_of_curriculum), accessed 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. L. W. DEMEIJ., – S. MERX., "Improving Curriculum Alignment and Achieving Learning Goals By Making the Curriculum Visible", in *International Journal for Academic Development*, Vol. 23, no. 3, 2018, 219 – 231.

<sup>9</sup>D. R. TOMAL., *et al.*, *Supervision and Evaluation for Learning and Growth: Strategies for Teacher and School Leader Improvement*, Rowman& Littlefield, Lanham 2015, see also, C. EVERETT., "Book Review", in *Global Education Review*, Vol. 3, no. 3, 2016, 168 – 169.



Nigerian University system. If this is so, then it simply means that humanities in Nigerian Universities, that is, where they exist, are guilty of incorrect foundation. This accusation is born from the explicit lack of ethics and moral principles in Nigerian Universities. Ethics and moral principles are an essential part of philosophy. As philosophy is expected to provide explanations to the many societal problems, it does so in cognizance of the operations of ethics and moral principles. This is to provide guidance to human correct living, correct human actions, with the aim of benefiting the whole human good. The understanding is that, if academic humanities are suffering from the correct foundation in the Universities, then it is due to the non-existence of philosophy at the grass roots of the foundation of humanities. The end result is that those formed in such an incorrect foundation, will be deficient in the two essential aspects of philosophy: ethics and moral principles.

Following these aforementioned problems, it becomes explicit that there is a need to reconstruct humanities in Nigerian Universities. This is exactly my understanding of our International Conference with the title 'Reimagining Humanities and Sciences in a Digital Age'. To begin, I think that it is beneficial to be engaged in a linguistic analysis of the word 'reimagining', this is to aid clarity and comprehension of the exact thing the General Studies Division of ESUT is set to achieve.

### **Linguistic Analysis of 'Reimagining'**

The Latin verb *Cotigare* is advantageous here and now. The present active participle of the Latin verb '*cogitare*' is '*cogitans*', which means 'imagining'. Now there is a prefix 're', affixed to the English word 'imagining' and it becomes 'reimagining', which is a noun and participle at the same time. It then means, 'imagine again', or 'imagine anew'. The word 'reimagining' needs to be further explained. It connotes a rethink that will lead to defense against an intention to inflict damage (threat) to humanity and the whole universe. Long down the ages, humans have always contemplated when the world (earth planet) will come to an end? The reason for this could be traced to the many abuses perpetrated by humans themselves. The consequence of these abuses against the earth planet convokes the thinking of a possible collapse of the earth. One aspect of the said collapse is already happening, that is, the advent of superior artificial – super intelligence, which takes over the activities of the human brain. This thinking is coming when geologists have predicted the *Anthropocene*<sup>10</sup> – derives from the Greek word '*anthropos*' (ἄνθρωπος), which translates to mean human and '*kainós*' (καινός), which means new. Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, suggest that humans are existing in a new geological epoch<sup>11</sup>. They explain

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<sup>10</sup>For further reading cf. N. WALLENHORST., – C. WULF., "The Planet: Caught Between Biogeophysical Knowledge and the Uncertainty of Our Adventure", in N. WALLENHORST., – C. WULF., (eds.), *Handbook of the Anthropocene: Humans Between Heritage and Future*, Springer Nature, Switzerland 2024, 1 – 8.

<sup>11</sup>P. J. CRUTZEN., – E. F. STOERMER., "The 'Anthropocene'", in *Global Change Newsletter*, Vol. 41, 2000, 17 – 18.



that the *Anthropocene* provides a description of the human total transformation of the earth planet<sup>12</sup>.

I am not sure if it is correct to analyze the word 'reimagining' without taking a departure from the history of the ancient. For this reason, it is possible to take a bearing from 'reimagining' as '**mimesis**' in Plato<sup>13</sup>, Aristotle, Confucius and Mengyan. The word '**mimesis**' is taken from the Greek root, '**mimos**' (person who imitates or represents), and '**mimesthia**' (imitation, representation or portrayal). '**Mimesis**' is very common in arts and play. In this sense, it connotes the presence of a work that is a model to be copied<sup>14</sup>. The noun '**mimesis**' can mean 're-enactment', or 'imitation', 'representation'<sup>15</sup>, these three meanings link '**mimesis**' to the word 'reimagining'. It is further linked to our topic through its aspect of education. Plato used '**mimesis**' in the perspective of educating the young people. In this sense, the young people liken themselves to their animators – teachers. With Plato and Aristotle, '**mimesis**' has a pedagogical connotation. Plato states thus: "guardians of an ideal state should be educated to imitate only what is appropriate"<sup>16</sup>. He reasons that young people learn faster through imitation, as a result, there should always be a model from which they can imitate.

Aristotle takes after Plato on '**mimesis**' as imitation of an action<sup>17</sup>. *Jean Paul Gustave Ricœur explicates further Aristotle's mimesis as the creative imitation of human action. He brings in what he calls the creative power of imagination, which he says, is real on two levels: at the individual and social levels. At the individual level, Ricœur explains that an action is estimated with a structured pattern of design. At the social level, he goes on to explain that "individuals relate to one another and to their collective tradition by means of figures of ideology and utopia"*<sup>18</sup>. I am more interested in the first level since it relates to the topic under investigation. It helps us to begin to propose the question regarding our quest for 'reimagining', that is, why are we discussing it? We may not be able to attempt to give a definitive answer to the question just raised, but we can infer from the word itself that it is in the present continuous tense. It is not a word which signifies the end of a journey. It further indicates that something was in place before now, that is, at the inception, which either is no longer there or it has been exhausted. If

<sup>12</sup>Cf. A. PANDIAN., – C. HOWE., (eds.), *Anthropocene Unseen: A Lexicon*, Punctum Books, California 2020, 17 – 18.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. W. J. VERDENIUS., *Mimesis: Plato's Doctrine of Artistic Imitation and Its Meaning To Us*, E. J. Brill, Leiden 1962, 1. 2.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. M. H. ABRAMS., – G. HARPHAM., *Glossary of Literary Terms*, Cengage Learning Publishing, Boston 2011, 89.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. H. BAKTIR., "The Concept of Imitation in Plato and Aristotle", in *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi Sayı*, Vol. 2 , 2003, 167–179.

<sup>16</sup>A. NEHEMAS., *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom and the Arts*, Rowman& Littlefield, New Jersey 1982, 300.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. ARISTOTLE., *Poetics*, in R. MCKEON., (ed.), *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, tr., I. Bywater, Modern Library, 2001, 1453 – 1487.

<sup>18</sup>P. RICŒUR., *Hermeneutics & the Human Sciences*, J. Thompson., (ed.), tr., Cambridge University Press, London 1981, 16.



it is the former, then we need to generate a new one that will replace that which is no longer there. But if it is the latter, then we have to work on our imagination, call it, our intuition.

At this juncture, I pause in order to introduce Ricœur's power of creative imagination. In doing this, I need to be very cautious not to muddle together the different meanings of imagination and so drift away from the correct signification of it. Imagination could be explained in two ways: reproductive and productive imaginations. Ricœur makes distinctions between the two types of imaginations. Reproductive imagination only reproduces a copy of the original reality. It does not add anything new, instead, it tries to retain the *status quo ante*. Productive imagination is the one that comes almost from nowhere. It does not copy from any already existing original because it is productive in itself. It produces a new reality. Applying these explanations to the word 'reimagining', it means that the General Studies Division is looking for a productive imagination and not a reproductive one<sup>19</sup>. Here, one notices a challenge to the conference theme on reimagining: are we reproducing the already failed curriculum or are we producing a new one? Ricœur challenges everyone to a genuine innovation in the same framework we have now.

Joel Robbins in 2004 wrote a book he entitled *Becoming Sinners*. He gives account of the social change among the people of Urapmin of Highland New Guinea. He uses the word 'adoption', that is, taking on something new without prejudging what happens to what has been there already<sup>20</sup>. Laurence Marshall Carucci questions if it is "possible to adopt forms of social practice without reevaluation in terms of an already existing set of local social practices and symbolic exemplars"<sup>21</sup>. For Carucci, anthropologists call this 'culture'. Good enough, the theme of the International Conference talks about reimagining. But I am convinced that it is all about copying what others have represented as coming from their own cultures. Our education systems all these while have been copies from foreign systems. This is because our country and other African countries are signatories to the UNESCO agenda for universal education. I state that these copied foreign systems are too far away for the direct replicas of our own indigenous cultural representations. It must be said that Institutions now talk and embark on 'reimagining' the origin of their foundations. This is because these institutions are losing focus of what they ought to be doing.

Alison L. Black and Rachael Dwyer reflect on the need for reformation of the local academic cultures. They call for an academic change that focuses on purposeful

<sup>19</sup>Cf. P. RICŒUR., *Lectures On Imagination*, (eds.), G. H. Taylor – R. D. Sweeney, University of Chicago Press Ltd., London 2024, xii.

<sup>20</sup>J. ROBBINS., *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society*, University of California Press, Los Angeles 2004, 11.

<sup>21</sup>L. M. CARUCCI., "Mimesis and Reimagining Identity Among Marshall Islanders", in J. MAGEO., – E. HERMANN., (eds.), *Mimesis and Pacific Transcultural Encounters: Making Likenesses in Time, Trade, and Ritual Reconfigurations*, Berghahn Books, New York 2017, 209 – 229.



pedagogy that will usher hope for the future<sup>22</sup>. Keith Webster agrees with the duo as he observes that universities all over the world are seriously improving their libraries, changing the use of space, and providing an information landscape<sup>23</sup>. Libraries are the custodians of books, for this reason, it can be said that books and libraries have a tight relationship. This will obviously continue into the future. The digital age permits services, resources and technologies available in the contemporary libraries. Libraries are very useful for constructive academic humanities. They provide a collection of information regarding the nature of humanities scholarship. Researchers on humanities avail themselves of a wealth of information they might otherwise have missed<sup>24</sup>.

## **Humanities**

Robert E. Proctor concurs with James Turner's exposition of the problem of the contemporary humanities. He adds that one of the difficulties of humanities, that is, those who are involved in them is that they "are often unable to agree upon what they should teach and why"<sup>25</sup>. The reason for this is that no one knows what exactly are humanities. Part of the problem is that no one has been able to know how to define humanities. This explains the reason why everyone who has anything to do with humanities just lists the disciplines a country has authority to fund. Proctor leans on the definition given by *Oxford English Dictionary* in his explanation of academic humanities. Humanities are learning concerned with human culture, especially the ancient Latin and Greek classics. In today's usage, humanities no longer carry such a definition, instead, one finds science and technology<sup>26</sup>. The fact that no one has been able to provide a common definition of what humanities are makes it necessary to attempt a deeper explanation of humanities.

### ***Studia Humanitatis* (humanistic studies)**

James Turner writes in his book on *Philology* (many sides study of texts, languages, and the phenomenon of language itself<sup>27</sup>) that humanities constitute the core wire of teaching and research work<sup>28</sup>. Turner traces the origin of modern humanities (even the contemporary) as disciplines to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Then, he explains, humanities were

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<sup>22</sup>Cf. A. L. BLACK., – R. DWYER., (eds.), *Reimagining the Academy: Shifting Towards Kindness, Connection, and Ethics of Care*, Palgrave Macmillan Publishing, London 2021, 2.

<sup>23</sup>K. WEBSTER., "Reimagining the Role of the Library in the Digital Age: Changing the Use of Space and Navigating the Information Landscape", at <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/02/15/reimagining-the-role-of-the-library-in-the-digital-age-changing-the-use-of-space-and-navigating-the-i>, accessed 4<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

<sup>24</sup>For further reading, cf. A. H. PERRAULT., – E. S. AVERSA., *Information Resources in the Humanities and the Arts*, Bloomsbury Publishing, New York City 2012.

<sup>25</sup>R. E. PROCTOR., *Defining the Humanities: How Rediscovering a Tradition Can Improve Our Schools: With a Curriculum for Today's Students*, Indiana University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Indianapolis 1998, xxiii.

<sup>26</sup>R. E. PROCTOR., *Defining the Humanities*, xxiii.

<sup>27</sup>J. TURNER., *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 2014, ix.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*,



made to be inside Philology. Now, except in classics departments or linguistic faculties, philology, Turner says, does not command any serious acceptance in the fields of research and academic disciplines. He notes that despite its fallen short in recognition, Philology contributed to the field of sciences, making it the pride of contemporary universities. It "inspired the most advanced humanistic studies in the United States and the United Kingdom"<sup>29</sup>.

Willem B. Drees talks of the plural and singular dimensions of an academic humanities<sup>30</sup>. Celeste Langan corroborates Drees in her *The Humanities, Plural*<sup>31</sup>. She thinks that humanities in the plural offers the possibility of examining "differences of the past, present and the future species of humanity"<sup>32</sup>. Humanities in the plural (in the sense it issued for this Conference) derives from the Latin root, *Litterae Humaniores*, which translates to mean 'more human studies'. This translation suggests that ***humaniores litterae*** concerns more with studies of human culture. For this reason, it treats more secular courses than divine ones. The reason why there is the plural dimension of humanity is that it allows the possibility of labeling the many new liberal courses or studies, call it, cultural studies surging into the university curricular<sup>33</sup>.

The analysis of the singular dimension of humanities is also very important since it helps to clarify the nexus between the university curriculum with humanity as a whole. Humanity in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century connote words like, 'kindness', graciousness, politeness, consideration for others and so on. This sense of humanity derives from the French '***humanité***' or '***umanité***', which means 'humankind', 'life on earth'. Its Latin root indicates that it is from '***humanitatem*** (***humanitas***)', which means, 'human nature', 'the human race', 'mankind', or still, 'human conduct', or 'good breeding'. Drees summarizes the definition of humanities in his question: What are the Humanities For? He responds that "humanities are academic disciplines in which humans seek understanding of human self-understandings and self-expressions, and of the ways in which people thereby construct and experience the world they live in"<sup>34</sup>. The understanding from Drees is that we are all human beings, so humanities are about humans themselves, especially in the manner they relate to themselves through the use of language. This enables humans to interpret the world they live in. The search for the meaning of humanities in a singular dimension connects to the scholarly study of the human world, which the General Studies Division entitles 'Humanities'. Inside humanities, one thinks of stories, histories, languages,

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<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, x.

<sup>30</sup>W. B. DREES., *What Are the Humanities For?*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2021, 15.

<sup>31</sup>C. LANGAN., "The Humanities, Plural", in *Townsend Newsletter*, 2006, 5 – 7.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>33</sup>For further reading, cf. P. GARDNER., *Oxford at the Crossroads: A Criticism of the Course of Litterae Humaniores in the University*, Legare Street Press, New York 2023.

<sup>34</sup>W. B. DREES., "What Are the Humanities?", in *What Are the Humanities For?*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2021, 7 – 120.



literatures, religions, and moralities of humans. Drees is then correct in his coinage of 'human humanities', which assists in the reflection on humanities and on humans.

Turner continues to explain that Philologists are interested in history and they agree that history should be both comparative and genealogical. They try to discover the historical origins in a very specific sense of the term. Doing so, leads them to unveil lines of descent: from an ancestral to the middle forms and finally, to contemporary one<sup>35</sup>. Natural Sciences replaces Philology in the contemporary humanities.

Turner shows how "Charles Eliot Norton was the most prolific begetter of the humanities at the time when modern American higher education was taking off, the decades after 1870"<sup>36</sup>. Norton treated Greek temples, medieval cathedrals, and Renaissance paintings all as 'texts'. He puts these physical relics of past worlds into their historical contexts, comparing them with other 'texts' of their times (literal and metaphorical [figurative]) in order to recover their meanings to the people who made them. Following this approach to the development of modern (and even contemporary) humanities, Norton is considered to be the founding father of humanities in the United States. His approach consists in history, comparative, and genealogical.

The only reason I am referencing Charles Norton and his Philological method of humanities is that he believed in the power of language. Language study formed the skeleton of the modern erudition and produced many disciplines that make up the humanities and even social sciences. The implication is that since the General Studies Division is now ready to start to reimagine the meaning of the present humanities, it is to the use of language that it must turn to. Language is connected to history because only through language could we transmit our culture, our tradition and the wisdom of our forefathers. For Turner, the birth of the modern humanities in the English-speaking world is from the womb of Philology. I am not sure if we have anything in our cultural past that is called Philology? But even if we do not have one, we could find something similar to it. We could return to the way our forefathers built knowledge. To do this, we may have to excavate the wisdom of the past. Attempting to do this, will be an effort to historically reconstruct the present in readiness for the future. Acting in this manner will enable us to understand where our modes of knowledge should have come from. It is only then that we can "grasp better the strengths, weaknesses, the intellectual acuity (clarity) and their blind spots"<sup>37</sup>. If ever we try to regenerate the heritage from our forefathers, then it becomes possible for us to detect the sources of our modes of knowledge. We will now be equipped with the capacity to map our knowledge and then, we will improve our future investigations. This should be the outcome of the exercise on reimagining humanities.

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<sup>35</sup>J. TURNER., *Philology*, x.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, xiii.



Turner underscores the current division in humanities and sciences. His description of the situation shades light on what is going on in our universities. He talks of living with conflicted minds. Here, disciplinary walls divide humanistic fields from each other. Then there is interdisciplinary research now in vogue in Nigerian Universities and elsewhere. In such a programme, humanistic scholars from different disciplines do collaborate on occasion. The important point here is the need to see what academic disciplines mean, "where they tie into each other, how we can most effectively cooperate with each other, and how we can most sensibly and usefully organize knowledge"<sup>38</sup>. These, Turner insists, are the things students, professors, deans and provosts need to know.

Michiel Leezenberg furnishes the idea that there are diverse disciplines that come under humanities: art history, musicology, linguistics, film studies, religious studies, and philosophy. Leezenberg explains that in many Universities, these diverse disciplines come to be united in an organized manner in a section of the University called 'Faculty'<sup>39</sup>. This apart, scientists are seriously involved in questions meant for the humanities in different academic disciplines, like cognitive science, cognitive neuroscience, artificial life, and behavioral genetics<sup>40</sup>. Humanities and sciences could stay together comfortably.

### **Which Humanities?**

It seems to me that the question which humanities poses already points to the presence of prejudice in the understanding of what exactly should humanities deal with and their sources. I am not sure if we are talking about African, or Igbo humanities? I have the thinking that the humanities in question must be the foreign ones introduced by the West. I am not alone in thinking this way. Geoffrey Galt Harpham in his lecture at the University in Istanbul on the humanities only scores specific American and Western secular versions of human being and human flourishing<sup>41</sup>. The entire project on humanities is at home with provincial prejudice. Drees corroborates Harpham in the following words: "the humanities might be suspected as an imperialist extrapolation"<sup>42</sup>.

Another reason that leads me to think that our academic humanities, and other academic pursuits are totally imperialistic in nature is that they are all structured in an American context. In the just said context, humanities (now found in liberal arts

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<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, xv.

<sup>39</sup>M. LEEZENBERG., *History and Philosophy of the Humanities: An Introduction*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2018, 15.

<sup>40</sup>Z. ZHANG., – W. SONG., – P. LIU., "Making and Interpreting: Digital Humanities as Embodied Action", in *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, Vol. 11, no. 13, 2024, at <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02548-3>, accessed 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

<sup>41</sup>G. G. HARPHAM., *The Humanities and the Dream of America*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2011, 8.

<sup>42</sup>W. B. DREES., "What Are the Humanities?", in *What Are the Humanities For?*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2021, 12.



education) are pursued in order that those in them will become well equipped to make much money. That apart, our humanities have their foundational origin in the UNESCO project on 'Mental Engineering and Education'. Paul Duedahl provides a succinct explanation of the said project. He writes that Julian Huxley was the first director of UNESCO after it was founded in November 1945. Huxley initiated what he called 'Scientific World Humanism' through which he wished to dismantle the idea of inequality, and then began to advance the idea of equality<sup>43</sup>. At the time in question, nationalism was the ideal. Next was the recognition of the important role of educationalists. They were the ones who could translate and transmit Huxley's equality agenda. The educationalists then began to control all departments of science. Inside the humanities and social sciences, UNESCO instituted associations in the fields of history, economics, law, political science and sociology. The outcome of these associations is the encouragement of these disciplines to work together in the pursuant of the United Nations academic agenda<sup>44</sup>. This led to the creation of new humanistic and social science in university studies. From thence on, our humanities never saw the light of our culture, it became entangled in the imperialist educational agenda.

Education normally goes with development of both the mental and the physical body. It, more than any other discipline, encourages thinking as well as the expansion of the brain's ability in reasoning in order to invent new ideas. The danger of the imperialist's education is that those of us who passed through it became copyists, reproducing only what the imperial masters wished us to have. We never started producing anything different from what the imperial masters allowed. This is in part, a UNESCO's creation through its mental engineering project. In another part, it is our own making since we remain tied to the *status quo*, refusing to modify. *Status quo* retards progress in every aspect of life, in the education sector, it blocks deep research into what can promote internal progress. Furthermore, the *status quo* in education, especially in sciences, impedes the process of learning and application of the acquired knowledge to daily living. It is imperative then to explore the third item of the title for our International Conference – sciences.

## **Sciences**

I begin by looking for the etymology of science. It is from the Latin verb '*scio*', '*scire*', which translates to mean 'know', 'to know' and '*scientia*', which means 'knowledge', 'understanding', or 'awareness'.

It seems that the origin of science is dependent on the reigning civilization. Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (c. 3000 – 1200 BCE) developed writing systems. This was in the Bronze Age. Francesca Rochberg writes that the writing system from Egypt and

<sup>43</sup>Cf. P. DUEDAHL., "Peace in the Minds: UNESCO, Mental Engineering and Education", in *Foro de Educacion*, Vol. 18, no. 2, 2020, 23 – 45.

<sup>44</sup>Cf. J. HUXLEY., *UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy*, (1 C/6, UNESCO/C/6), The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, London 1946, 8.



Mesopotamia found their roots in “early Greek and Medieval science, mathematics, astronomy and medicine”<sup>45</sup>. Plato began to conceptualize the natural world and the possibility of navigating it in order to provide explanation of it. Before Plato, Thales and other pre-Socratic philosophers attempted to give natural phenomena their own explanation independent of supernatural assistance. Pythagoras and his school dealt with the theory of numbers, this is very useful in today’s mathematics. Hippocrates was behind the invention of systematic medical science<sup>46</sup>.

**Techne** is the term normally used by Socrates to stand for skill, art, craft, expertise, profession, science, knowledge, technical knowledge. David Roochnik explains that sometimes, Plato borrows from Socrates the understanding of **techne** to mean “a thorough, masterful knowledge of a specific field that typically issues in a useful result, can be taught to others, and can be recognized, certified, and rewarded”<sup>47</sup>. Aristotle took after Plato’s *techne* as science, but differs in the meaning of it. He dedicates a considerable time in explaining what is science. He begins with the examination of the Greek word *φύσις*[phusis], which translates to mean ‘nature’. In Book I of *Physics*, Aristotle touches on the ‘Science of Nature’. He concerns himself with changeable subjects, that is, physical questions about sensible realities, which are characterized by movement<sup>48</sup>. *Physis* – physics is the study of sensible beings (things). Science for Aristotle is the investigation of what is physics, the nature of things (matter and movement). Science goes to demonstrate that matter and movement exist and it provides the explanation of the contents that constitute matter and movement.

Isaac Newton built on the already existing understanding of science to develop his foundation of classical mathematics. This was the origin of Newton’s book *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* in 1687<sup>49</sup>. Newton’s physics states that “matter moves at constant speed in a straight line unless a force acts on it”<sup>50</sup>. He said this because material objects exert forces on each other and in that process affect the movement of other objects. The Enlightenment Age ushered in a revolution in science, and this seems to have started with Newton scientific discoveries.

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<sup>45</sup>F. ROCHBERG., “Natural Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia”, in M. Shank., – R. Numbers., – P. Harrison., (eds.), *Wrestling with Nature: From Omens to Science*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2011, 9.

<sup>46</sup>Cf. A. TOUWAIDE., “Hippocrates”, in T. F. GLICK., – S. LIVESEY., – F. WALLIS., (eds.), *Medieval Science, Technology, and Medicine: An Encyclopedia*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, New York 2005, 224 – 226.

<sup>47</sup>D. ROOCHNIK., *Of Art and Wisdom: Plato’s Understanding of Techne*, Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania 1996, 1.

<sup>48</sup>G. REALE., *A History of Ancient Philosophy: Plato and Aristotle*, (ed.), J. Catan, State University of New York Press, 1990, 293.

<sup>49</sup>I. NEWTON., *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, Typis Barrillot&Filii Biblop, &Typogr., Genevae 1739.

<sup>50</sup>B. CROWELL., *Newtonian Physics*, Light and Matter Publishing, California 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2003, 13.



All I have tried to do in the above two paragraphs was to demonstrate that science was and continues to be a study of natural objects. Science is all about nature and things inside it. This makes it possible to ask the question, what about our own science?

### **The Use of Wood, Stone, Animal Skin: Igbo Indigenous Science and Technology**

Before the advent of colonial science and technology to Igbo land, science was understood as magic, the means through which the relationships of humans with the natural world were explained<sup>51</sup>. The Igbo and other African people through trial and error fabricated tools such as wood, stone, animal skin, etc. Fabrication remains the method of Igbo science and technology. Africa in general has no formal academic curriculum of science education. But she believes in training and formation of people to take responsibilities of relevant needs in the community. The system of education and learning was then principally, apprenticeship. Ordinarily, depositing knowledge in libraries and archives were not common in Igbo culture and elsewhere in Africa. The method of conserving information was more of orality. This was then committed to individual memories from where they are transmitted orally from one generation to the other. The elders, seers, priests and those specially skilled in interpreting mysteries, were responsible for interpreting natural observed events.

Scientific skills were manifested in farming, food preparations and preservation, clothing (textile, dying, and weaving), blacksmithing, salt making, pot molding, hunting, traditional medicine, etc. In Igbo societies, science and technology complement each other. The Igbo people were among the highest producers and exporters of palm oil, they manufactured cloth from cotton plants, and extracted medicine from plant herbs to cure diseases<sup>52</sup>. Maurice M. Iwu records in his *Handbook of African Medicinal Plants* that herbal plants are “medicine with food plants which are used for therapeutic purposes”<sup>53</sup>. This is in a way referencing African medical science and I applaud it. Even before Iwu’s *Handbook*, there was the blacksmith iron technology in many villages in Igboland, and elsewhere in Nigeria. Onwuka N. Njoku reports that Awka smiths and iron technology were well known throughout the Igbo hinterland<sup>54</sup>. Uzoma Osuala acknowledges the cultural indigenous technology in Igbo territory before the colonial period<sup>55</sup>. The indigenous people were industrially and

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<sup>51</sup>N. E. DIENYE., – S. P. T. GBAMARIA., *Science Education: Theory and Practice*, Totan Publishers Limited, Port-Harcourt 1990, 131.

<sup>52</sup>F. O. EZENDU., – C. U. NKOKELONYE., – J. C. ADIGWE., “Science Education and Challenges of Globalization in Igbo Nation”, in *US-China Education Review B*, Vol. 3, no. 2, 2013, 116 – 127.

<sup>53</sup>M. M. IWU., *Handbook of African Medicinal Plants*, CRC Press, London 1993, 1.

<sup>54</sup>O. N. NJOKU., “Awka and Early Iron Technology in Igboland: Myths, Probabilities and Reality”, in Smithsonian Libraries and Archives, at [https://www.si.edu/object/siris\\_sil\\_595968](https://www.si.edu/object/siris_sil_595968), accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

<sup>55</sup>U. OSUALA., “Colonialism and the Disintegration of Indigenous Technology in Igboland: A Case Study of Blacksmithing in Nkwerre”, *Historical Research Letter*, Vol. 3, 2012, at



agriculturally productive due to their creative science and technology. Colonial adventure killed this very technology, post-colonial Nigeria did not go on with the local technology. Regrettably, the technology died a natural death, since no one could continue it.

It is important that science is part of the theme of the International Conference. The challenges facing our society today can be answered through the progress in science and technology. But as of the moment, it is not clear if any advancement is being made in these areas. Every culture has its own science and technology and on these two are found the many answers to society's challenges. Scientists develop batteries that can power the energy the sun generates. They invent vaccines to save humans from novel viruses. Scientists advance technology that allows humans to connect in a way that could not have been imagined just a generation or two ago<sup>56</sup>. Nigeria as a whole needs to survive and advance amidst her present challenges. It becomes an imperative for everyone to understand the social realities of the present epoch. Understanding are tools to manage human affairs, its attendant perils and pitfalls of intervention. Nigeria needs and must grow expertise in different fields, in communication, interpretation of data, and governance of technology<sup>57</sup>.

### **Digital Age**

Linguistic analysis of 'digital' shows that it derives from the Latin word '**digitalis**', which is from '**digitus**', meaning, 'finger or toe'. From the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, '**digitus**' began to have a secondary meaning, counting and numerals<sup>58</sup>. This was then related to another Latin word '**dicere**', which in English means 'to tell' or 'to say'. The Latin *dicere* and *digitus* have the same etymology, '**deik**', 'to show', 'pronounce solemnly'. Etymologically then '**digitus**', and '**dicere**' connect when the finger is used in counting numerical digits. This was transposed on computers that run on data in digit form. This meaning can be further explained. I remember that when I was in primary school, mathematical numbers were counted in the fingers and toes of the pupils. The adjective 'digital', which pertains to numbers below 10 came into vogue around the 1650s. Then 'digital' commanded the sense of 'fingers'. Digital means making use of numerical digits. This understanding of digital began from 1938 to the present. It is in this sense that 'digital' should be understood here. Computer operations run on data, and so, it is always in the form of digits.

Scholars in contemporary society "make use of at least some form of digital resources, like, email, internet databases<sup>59</sup>. This has ushered in the learning of how to use a

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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351780620\\_Colonialism\\_and\\_the\\_Disintegration\\_of\\_Indigenous\\_Technology\\_in\\_Igboland](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351780620_Colonialism_and_the_Disintegration_of_Indigenous_Technology_in_Igboland), accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

<sup>56</sup>L. BERDAHL., – J. MALLOY., – L. YOUNG., *For the Public Good: Reimagining Arts Graduate Programs in Canadian Universities*, University of Alberta Press, Canada 2024, 2.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/digit>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025.

<sup>59</sup>T. WELLER., (ed.), *History in the Digital Age*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London 2013, 3.



database, scan materials, research, as well as teaching online – zoom online lectures<sup>60</sup>. The implication is that humans are currently in the province of new digital technologies, which have to do with new communication technologies of computer and software systems. Digital technologies encompasses the development of new course materials and data collections for scholarship. This becomes more evident in the radical digital revolution in the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), mobile platforms, sensors, social media collaboration systems. All of these rapidly influence the way humans live their lives, the way they work, as well as communicate<sup>61</sup>.

The concept of the digital age is already not too difficult to comprehend. This is because it is not hidden as it is inside our families. Parents, teachers, instructors and catechists complain a lot about the manner in which young people get distracted and glued to their smartphones. It is no longer news that young people skip sleeping in order to remain glued to their screens. The information here is that in the digital age, the world is connected, young people have real fun creating and sharing videos, tik-tok and so on. If this practice is extended to the youth in the University institutions, one will observe that University students are more sophisticated in their thinking, which results in both positive and negative consequences. Our local Universities are at home with both negative and positive aspects of the digital age. Even the United Nations and other International Organizations are thinking out loud regarding the implications of digital technology, by launching what it calls 'Global Research, Policy and Practice Community'<sup>62</sup>.

Digital age is where communication and computer science meet. Christian Fuchs provides other aspects of the digital age as mass media, library, business, biological and medical information<sup>63</sup>. The world workforce is changing to more digital, and at the same time, global, varied and media proficient. This makes business and universities expectations, needs and demands to want to move even faster. Titilola Lucy Babalola researches digital culture in Nigeria<sup>64</sup>. She tries to provide reasons for the gaps between digital literacy and digital humanities activities. Babalola underscores the many obstacles facing those who try to get into using internet services. She nurses the idea that many digital activities have been going on in Nigeria, yet, she says, there is the lack of digital humanities in the academia. Her research

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<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. L. RICE., *Rewriting the Rules for the Digital Age*, 2017 Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends Report, Deloitte University Press, 2 – 3.

<sup>62</sup>UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN EDUCATION FUNDUNICEF., *Young and Online: Children's Perspectives on Life in the Digital Age: The State of the World's Children 2017 Companion Report*, UNICEF, at <https://www.unicef.org/timorleste/reports/young-and-online-childrens-perspectives-life-digital-age>, accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025.

<sup>63</sup>C. FUCHS., *Digital Ethics: Media, Communication and Society*, Vol. 5, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London 2023, 12.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. T. L. BABALOLA., "The Digital Humanities and Digital Literacy: Understanding the Digital Culture in Nigeria", in *Digital Studies/le Champ Numérique*, Vol. 5, no. 1, 2014, at <https://www.digitalstudies.org/article/id/7255/>, accessed 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.



findings reveal that Africa has 7% of internet users<sup>65</sup>. Nigeria and Egypt are in no. 20 in the list of countries using internet services. Nigeria, she records, is found in the 11<sup>th</sup> position and about 48.366 million were involved in the internet services in 2012.

Babalola points out that the Nigerian internet user survey reveals that university students use the internet more than any other group in Nigeria. For this reason, she thinks that the ratio of digital humanities involvement ought to be at the top. Unfortunately, she states, it is not yet at the top. She tries to give reasons why it is not yet so: one of the obstructions to smooth and steady internet services for the users in Nigeria is low network connections. This obstruction is built on the inefficient Internet Service Providers (IPS), it is followed by non-Wi-Fi connection. Even when there is Wi-Fi connection, it remains inaccessible to the students in the university campuses. This of course affects both the professors and students' research efficiency, as well as the standard of the output of their research works. This obstructing factor militates against Nigerian universities' participation in many international online lectures, conferences, and formation programs. International experts as a result, could not give lectures online to Nigerian students from their local posts.

Babalola's survey information provides explanations regarding the alternatives for university students. She talks of accessing internet services through data (airtime vouchers) installed in students' smart phones and laptops. Yet, this did not reduce the problem at any considerable rate. It is always the same talk: 'no network service'. Although, Babalola tries to justify all of these shortcomings by bringing in the aspect of Nigeria being a poor developing country. It is here that I disagree with her. It is not anything about being poor, rather it is about not being diligent on the part of both the Internet Service Providers (IPS), subscribing engine of MTN, GLO, AIRTEL, ETISALAT and others. The users also have a share of the blame. It is just like everything in Nigeria, call it, the Nigerian style. What really does it take to install a functioning Internet Service Provider (IPS)?

What about the electricity supply? This should not be overstretched since it is a perennial sickness in Nigeria. Many people in Nigeria use 'self-electric power supply'. Still this did not guarantee steady power supply. One reason for this could be that fuel price is high and so, people are no longer able to afford constant fueling of their electric power generators. The university scenario should by now become more confounded. Imagine a university without electricity energy supply, how will students and professors become deeply involved in the digital world?

Bukky Olufemi Omotayo conducted a similar survey in 2006 on 'A Survey of Internet Access and Usage Among Undergraduates in an African University'. Now, calculating from 2006 to 2025, one understands that after 19 years of Omotayo's survey, the situation has not changed, that is, there seems not to have been any improvement

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<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*,



from her survey and the result of Babalola's survey. I do not think that it is necessary to give details of the analysis of Omotayo's survey at Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife. Yet, few words need be said to that effect. Omotayo's survey shows that the university's library is connected to the internet but could not guarantee access to stable internet services to the students. What happens is that students use their pocket money to pay for data subscriptions. Apart from this, the internet services are as good as not connected. It is very slow and in the end, it will never get connected<sup>66</sup>.

**Digitalis** (digital) and **humanitas** (humanities) are already in collaboration with each other, leading to the coinage 'digital humanities', previously called 'humanities computing'.

## **Conclusion**

I have tried to dissect the General Studies Division's theme for the International Conference: Reimagining Humanities and Sciences in a Digital Age. I made an attempt to stay on the theme and have demarcated it into four items thus: i) Reimagining, ii) Humanities, iii) Sciences and iv) Digital Age. I reflected on each item through an analysis of meaning, with much attention to the historical record on each item. The reason for this approach is to guarantee deeper comprehension of the theme and its contents. I found doing this rewarding since I have been able to keep myself abreast of what I think the General Studies Division is contemplating to do. I encourage it to grow the zeal that can translate into action the result of its contemplation.

I wish to integrate some suggestions as part of the component of this conclusion. I turn my attention to them right away.

## **Suggestions**

### **1. The Use of Vernacular Languages**

The use of vernacular, in our context, Igbo language as a compulsory language of communication and transmission of lectures in all the levels of schooling should be encouraged. This suggestion applies to other parts of Nigeria, and as well, Africa. This will improve rapid comprehension of all the subjects/courses taught. I am not alone in this call. Adedamola Olugbenga Jaiyesimi made this same recommendation in 2021, when he talked of teaching in the mother tongue<sup>67</sup>. Since we are talking about reimagining, we should also make sure that it is accompanied with innovativeness. Vernacular languages are already inherent in the culture of any given group of people, they shape and determine the contents of the cultural studies of the same group of people. The only thing we lack as of the moment is the audacity to encourage and insist on their use for institutional transmission of academic instructions, their use in government offices, and their becoming official languages.

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<sup>66</sup>Cf. B. O. OMOTAYO., "A Survey of Internet Access and Usage Among Undergraduates in an African University", in *International Information & Library Review*, Vol. 38, 2006, 215 – 224.

<sup>67</sup>A. O. JAIYESIMI., "Rethinking of Formal Education in Nigeria", in *Punch* Newspaper, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021, at <https://punchng.com/rethinking-formal-education-in-nigeria/>, accessed 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025.



## **2. Cultural Studies**

Cultural studies are a process of producing useful knowledge about human culture. They are a specific tradition of research and education<sup>68</sup>, which forms an intellectual and political tradition. Tradition connects to the mythical, which "produces collective identity and shared sense of purpose"<sup>69</sup>. Raymond Williams suggests that cultural studies are a form of literary history. Laurent Martin corroborates this view by linking cultural studies to cultural history<sup>70</sup>. Edward Burnett Taylor gives the essential components of human culture thus: knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, habits etc. All of these are acquired by humans as members of society<sup>71</sup>. Margaret Mead, thinks that culture is the learned behavior of a society of a subgroup. Williams adds that culture involves organization of production, the structure of the family, the structure of institutions which governs social relationships<sup>72</sup>. Culture, he says, is the characteristic forms through which members of the society communicate. The different expressions of what is culture helps to understand and explain what cultural studies are all about and why I think we should be engaged in it. Culture is at the disposal of cultural studies, it aids cultural studies to describe its practices. Cultural studies is the expression of academic humanities since it functions through cultural practices and power and political relations<sup>73</sup> in a given culture. Richard Johnson corroborates Williams, he thinks that cultural studies are like humanities that rely on practical skills and the use of traditional strategies for its operations<sup>74</sup>.

One of the reasons why I am suggesting cultural studies is that they square up well with the theme of the International Conference on reimagining humanities. This is a contemporary epoch and it is an epoch which favors the formation of new academic disciplines with much interest in academic humanities. Cultural studies benefit the project on reimagining the current academic humanities as found in the curriculum of studies of Nigerian Universities. It provides almost an absolute independence in generating courses that could propel Nigerians to growth in science and technology. Bearing in mind that science and technology as already explained above are ingrained in the culture of a group of people. The Western science and technology could not be sufficient for the whole created universe. Other parts of the world should emerge with their own so that we could have multiple sciences and technologies at the disposal of humans. If the Western science and technology fails or could not reach a particular zone of the universe, that zone should not be condemned to use the Western type of

<sup>68</sup>R. JOHNSON., *et al.*, *The Practice of Cultural Studies*, Sage Publications, London 2004, 7.

<sup>69</sup>R. JOHNSON., "What Is Cultural Studies Anyway?", in *Social Text*, no. 16, 1986 – 1987, 38 – 80.

<sup>70</sup>L. MARTIN., "Cultural History and Cultural Studies: A Long-Deferred Encounter", in *Diogenes: Revue Internationale des Sciences Humanies*, Vol. 2, no. 258-259-260, 2017, 25 – 37.

<sup>71</sup>E. B. TAYLOR., *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, John Murray Publishing, London 1920, 1.

<sup>72</sup>R. WILLIAMS., *The Long Revolution*, Chatto&Windus, London 1961, 57 – 70; see also R. WILLIAMS., "The Analysis of Culture", in J. STOREY., (ed.), *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, The University of Georgia Press, Athens 1998, 48 – 56.

<sup>73</sup>Z. SARDAR., – B. VAN LOON., *Introducing Cultural Studies*, (ed.), R. Appignanesi, Totem Books, New York 1998, 6.

<sup>74</sup>R. JOHNSON., *et al.*, *The Practice of Cultural Studies*, 3.



science and technology. It will simply use other available science and technology and life goes on.

We need opinions on how to proceed to the great future. But we equally need knowledge guided by relevant social and epistemic (knowledge-promoting) values. In this sense, we are looking for 'responsible scholarship'. This is where cultural studies come into vogue. Martha Nussbaum thinks that arts and humanities assist students to learn critical thinking needed for independent action and the intelligence to resist the power of blind tradition and authority. According to Nussbaum, students who study art and literature learn to imagine the others' situations<sup>75</sup>. Only humanities for their own sake could guarantee the imaging of the situations and life conditions of the other. Robert G. Bednarik observes that humanities have no utility, this is because they exist mostly for their own sake<sup>76</sup>. Yet, the roles and functions of humanities will not provide answers on how to grow more and better food. Even at that, the relevance of humanities must continue to be noticed in people's cultural setting. literature, history, religion, arts, philosophy, economics, and so on.

### **Remodeling the Nigerian Curriculum of Studies**

Curriculum derives from the Latin word '*currere*' and it means 'to run', like running a race course. In this sense, it is a path that students have to follow in order to complete all the academic activities/programs<sup>77</sup>. Curriculum is a list of subjects to be studied, and it is called planned experiences every learner must be exposed to in order to attain his or her learning goals<sup>78</sup>. For this reason, it could be said to be a designed guide to aid instruction. Curriculum contains skill and concepts taught and evaluated to assist students attain their goals and aspirations in life. Turner begins to explain the problems inherent in today's higher education. He states that "higher education may be in perpetual crisis"<sup>79</sup>. This statement describes correctly the situation of Universities in Nigeria, which I think is caused by inadequate and half-implemented curriculum of studies. There is also what is termed 'curricular stagnation'. The current curriculum of studies in Nigerian Universities lack any touch on ingenuity, innovation and critical creative thinking. Many new courses are been introduced into universities' curriculum of studies all over the world. Most of these new courses are nowhere to be found in Nigerian universities. Courses like, social realities, social epistemology (knowledge), are yet to find their acceptance in Nigerian universities.

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<sup>75</sup>M. NUSSBAUM., *Not for Profit*, x.

<sup>76</sup>R. G. BEDNARIK., "Rendering Humanities Sustainable", in *Humanities* Vol. 1, 2012, 64 – 71.

<sup>77</sup>D. S. SRIVASTAVA., – S. KUMARI., (eds.), *Curriculum and Instruction*, Isha Books, New Delhi, 2005, 2.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*,

<sup>79</sup>J. TURNER., *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 2014, xv.



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