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The author of this passage “On the Use and Abuse of History for Life”, is Friedrich Nietzsche. He was a son of Lutheran minister and was born on 15th of October, 1844, in Rocken, close to Leipzig.  Friedrich, Nietzsche was a philosopher from Germany and also a cultural critic. In addition, he was a composer, poet, and classical philologist. He made intense publications in the period 1970s-1980s. His fame came from uncompromisingly criticizing the traditional European morality as well as religion. He is also famous for conventional philosophical ideas as well as political and social pieties connected to modernity. Most of the criticisms he made depend on the psychological diagnoses which reveals the false unconsciousness that infect the received ideas of people. And for this reason, Nietzsche is associated with the late modern thinkers such as Freud and Marx. This group of thinkers advanced the ‘suspicion’s hermeneutics’ against the traditional values[[1]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn1).

There are two key terms used in the title of this passage are ‘history’ and ‘life’. It is worth noting that these key terms have been broadly used in the passage.  By using the term ‘history’ Nietzsche refers to the historical knowledge we have about the previous culture. For instance, the Renaissance, Rome and Greece culture. This previous culture entails knowledge of the past music, literature, philosophy among others. Additionally, he has in his mind the concept of scholarship in general that involves a commitment towards the scholarship strict principles of even scientific methods.  He also has self-awareness of the general history that continues to pace one’s culture and time when relating to others who come first.[[2]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn2)

The other key term used in the title, that is, ‘life’ has not been clearly defined in any part of the passage. This is because at one point, Nietzsche, compare it to ‘the dark driving insatiably self-driving force’. He tells us nothing more. It seems that when he talks about ‘life’, he has something in his mind.  And this something could be a deep and rich as well as creative engagement with this world we live in. creating an impressive culture has a prime significance to Nietzsche[[3]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn3).

In this passage, Nietzsche talks about how excess history can be dangerous to our lives.  He emphasizes on the disadvantages of having too much history in our present lives. In other words, the author of this passage argues that having too much knowledge about history can cause five key problems as outlined in the passage. In the view of Nietzsche, history is culture that is now bloated with excess knowledge. this knowledge’s explosion does not ‘serve’ life. That is, this knowledge does not in any way make one richer or more vibrant [[4]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn4)

In many events, scholars get obsessed over the methodology as well as the sophisticated analysis, hence making them loose the focus on their work’s real purpose. In all times that is supposed to be emphasized on is not the methodology used. Instead, scholars ought to focus on the undertakings in serving to enrich both contemporary culture and life. However, in most occasions, instead of attempting to be original and creative, the educated people just immerse themselves into scholarly activities that are relatively dry. And hence, end up with merely Culture’s knowledge rather than getting a real culture. Rather than having an experience of things we adopt a scholarly attitude that is detached to them. And one may think that, for example, the difference that existence between being transported through a musical composition or a painting.  And through this thought you notice certain influences are reflected from the previous composers or artists[[5]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn5).

In more than half of this passage, Nietzsche has identified the five specific disadvantages associated with having too much knowledge of history. And the remaining parts of the passage mainly elaborates those key points. The following are the five key demerits of having excess knowledge about history. The first drawback is that it leads to too much contrast between what goes on the minds of people and the kind of life they live. A good example is the philosophers who have immersed themselves into Stoicism and they don’t live like the stoics did. The simply live the normal live that is lived by anybody else. Hence, making philosophy purely theoretical and not a thing to be lived.

The second disadvantage states that excess historical knowledge makes us to view ourselves to be better than those who live in previous ages. We have the tendency of looking back at the past periods like inferior compared to the present era in different ways.  Particularly, perhaps, in the field of morality. The modern historians are boastful of their objectivity. However, the best type of history is not the one that is conscientiously objective within the dry sense of scholars. The best historians usually function like artists in bringing the previous era to life.

The third drawback is that excess historical knowledge causes disruption to instincts and hindrance to mature development. To support, this thought, Nietzsche complains about how the modern scholars are cramming themselves too fast with a lot of knowledge. This results in them loosing profundity. The other feature of the modern scholarship is too much specialization that have driven them far away from wisdom. This broadens then manner they view things.

The fourth drawback is that extreme historical knowledge makes us view ourselves like inferior imitators to our predecessors.  And the fifth and the last drawback, this excess knowledge of history leads to both irony and cynicism. To expound on the last two drawbacks, Nietzsche, embarked on the Hegelianism’s sustained critique.

The author concludes the passage by expressing the hope he is in the ‘youth’.  In this expression he refers to only those who have not been changed by having too much education[[6]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210431_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn6). This means, mean the author wants us to live the modern life without putting much focus on the past events. Some cultures are old and hence in think they should not be applied in today’s era since every age has its own styles of life. In my opinion, I think the author advises us to focus on the present in order to develop in our lives. The author of this passage. ‘On the Use and Abuse of History for Life”, criticizes scholars who present ideas of culture of the past period and yet fail to follow that culture.

2- of Sociological Method

Emile Durkheim is among the most significant sociologists who contributed to the many studies made in the field of philosophy. His work has led to the explanation and interpretations of different aspects and elements in sociology. The content of this paper is based on providing a critical description and analysis of a passage from Durkheim`s *Rules of Sociological Method.*

Durkheim was a French sociologist who concentrated on how the society maintained its integrity and the way the people acted in the ear of modernity. The author is confident that there are categories of facts that showcase unique characteristics in people. They include the way people behave, and think. The attributes are from a coercive ability that is dominant in every individual. According to Durkheim, sociology is the study of social facts. He is confident that sociology is a unique type of science due to some reasons. One of the reasons is that sociology is determined by one object which is the social fact. This makes it different from philosophy or psychology for they are involved with multiple disciplines and areas of interest. Also, sociology applies a scientific method. According to Durkheim,” sociology is then, not an auxiliary of any other science; it is itself a distinct and autonomous science.” [[1]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210432_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn1) He is of the opinion that “in every society, there are some phenomena which can be differentiated from those studied by the other natural science.” According to him, “social facts every way of acting, fixing or not, capable of exercising on the individual and external constraint; or organ, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its manifestation.”[[2]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210432_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn2) The book does not explain how one`s decisions are the reasons behind the making of a structured system which is the result of the social facts among the people in the society. Social realities have been portrayed as external and coercive to individuals.

According to the passage, the characteristics of people are manifestations of people`s acts thus cannot be confused with any other scientific phenomena that are not within the people`s inner self. [[3]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210432_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn3)It is because is vital to the existence of people`s behavior. The mental abilities of people are the elements responsible for making them social beings. Social facts represent both practice and the rules that govern behavior. Social facts render the way humans behave to be crucial in the community and are allowed in all societies. Law, morality, and language are some of the elements that are formed through one`s thoughts thus leading into different institutions in the community. The institutions include family, church, school, and government among others. Social facts are demanding for they should be followed for when people do not act according to their guidelines, they face the consequences. According to Durkheim, the principles of sociology are the factors that control the study of social facts. The first principle is that social elements are considered as objects. Social events are perceived as entities that are free from an individual`s mind. They are studied as external things for they manifest to people within a foreign context. This confirms the idea of Durkheim that sociology can also be the study of reality as it is aimed at studying real things that influence people`s behavior and life in general. The way people relate to each other is dependent on different factors including the customs, legal rules and the moral standards joining them together.

In the book, Durkheim also describes social facts as “states of the collective mind” [[4]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210432_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn4)that are assumed to be present in private minds. He agrees with the opinion that the manifestation of the social facts are associated with how people relate and are dependent on the way the person in question appears both internally and externally.  Human ability is a result of the inner being that is in everyone and is present in all people of the society. The nature of social facts is imposed on people through various ways such as education for people are taught how to behave and carry out specific activities. The presence of social events in people is recognized through the acts that people engage in on daily basis. According to Durkheim, suicide and work are the main acts that were used to identify social facts in people. Moral beliefs results to one developing personal beliefs. People apply their beliefs as a guide to morality hence the society sets its principles that act as norms. How a group of individuals is organized is determined by social norms present within them. This is because, the political and economic organization of the society is in control of people`s behavior and political ideologies. The term social has been used to describe the new kind of people who have the characteristics that are not present in a person`s consciousness. According to him, there are not two types of social facts for there is only one class. The only thing there is that the concept of social facts is a wide topic of consolidated features of social structures. The features include population size and distribution among the people. The generalization of the public opinion makes social facts become an elastic issue that can be argued upon by people to bring about many concepts.

The passage tries to explain that sociology defines the ways through which people frame the ideologies of morality, family, the state and the society itself. It is because the community is as a result of human activities. Though it is not clear whether if ideologies are contributed by the social concepts in the community, Durkheim suggests that human beings believe that social phenomena present themselves from external content thus if any aspect does not possess this characteristic, it is not a social fact. This feature is the concept that lays the foundation for al sociological methods. Sociologists should always focus on phenomena that are related to science for those concepts that are formed from other disciplines can only be studied with extra-science needs. Another rule of sociological methods is that “the subject matter of research must only include a group of phenomena defined beforehand by certain common external characteristics, and all phenomena which correspond to this definition must be so included.”[[5]](https://morgan.blackboard.com/webapps/assignment/uploadAssignment?content_id=_2210432_1&course_id=_97481_1&group_id=&mode=view#_ftn5)  Durkheim insisted that each scientific research should always start with the definition of the specific number of phenomena that are connected with the investigation in question.  Also, if the interpretation of the events is objective, it should refer to the visible stages of the research and naturally connected to the aspects themselves. Science always dismisses the concepts derived from extra-scientific principles. Science creates new information from the information gathered from investigations. Durkheim forgot that natural sciences also could be subjective and that data collected from studies sometimes are biased in cases of observable data. Sociological observation should always be equally objective and free from individual opinions. This makes social facts in sociological methods be applied if they are detached from personal opinions in which they manifest themselves in social reality.