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**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTION**

**GST 203**

**CHAPTER 2**

**AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE**

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. The pre-colonial is the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigerian while the colonial period refers of the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidence from different part of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now know as Nigeria since the palaeolithic period 500,000-9000BC. The artefirmed, mostly stone tools, found by archaeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilization. The Stone Age can be divided into several period. These are: Early stone Age 3,000,000-35,000BC; middle Age, 35,000-15,000BC and; late stone Age, 15,000-500BC.

The excavation of a stone Age skeleton at IWO ELERU near Akure in ondo state has thrown more light on the earliest occupation of Nigeria. The skeleton was dated some 12,000 years ago, and this suggests that the country has been long inhabited.

**The Achievements of early man**

The man who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment. First, he needed food. For this purpose he began to hunt the animals and to gather fruits. But he soon began to invent tool consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools.

**The scientific and technological development of early Nigerian society**

* Major landmark in Early Nigerian historical: information on the major land marks in Nigerian history was made possible through the excavation work done on places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past.
* Nok culture/civilization: the discovery of a terracotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places such as WAMBA, KATSINA-ALA and JEMA.
* Benin civilization: Benin was important for its art-work. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass.
* Ife civilization: Ife is important because of its terracotta and bronze heads. Objects such as stools and figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nail.
* Igbo ukwu civilization: some bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to the excavation of three sites in the area by an archaeologist called Thurstan Shaw.

Historical Background of pre-colonial political system in Yoruba land

The Yoruba are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria and are united by language. The Yoruba people trace their origin to ODUDUWA who was the founder of the Yoruba kingdom. ILE IFE is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people.

**Political structure of the pre-colonial Yoruba land**

The political structure of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. Each consisted of a capital town, subordinate town, villages, and farmlands.

**Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Igbo land**

The Igbo people are the best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is because from the ancient time, they had no centralized states. The Igbo are grouped into five sub-cultures:

* The Igbo of Eastern Nigeria
* The Igbo of south-Eastern Nigeria
* The Igbo of North-Eastern Nigeria
* The Northern Igbo

Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Hausa land

Hausa land is located in Northern Nigeria. Hausa land, before 1804 was made up of fourteen states, and they were of two distinct groups. \* Hausa Bakwai and\* Hausa Banza.

Islam was introduced to hausa land in the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the religion of the ruling class.

THANK YOU.