NAME: OYEBANJI OLAJUMOKE

MATRIC NUMBER: 19/LAW01/233

COURSE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL INSTITUTE OF NIGERIA

DEPARTMENT: LAW

CHAPTER 2: AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF NIGERIA STATE.

The pre-colonial period is the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria. The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown that there are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Palestine period 500,000-9000BC. The artifacts, mostly stone fools, found by archaeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the Stone Age civilization. The men who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment. First, he needed food.

There is evidence of more advanced technology in various parts of Nigeria during the bronze. Indeed, one of the most active periods, around 500BC to 200Ad. During this period there were many people in Nigeria who made scriptures. Many were of human heads and figures. They varied greatly in size, from small sized objects of only two and a half centimeters to huge objects. The site in which the figures were found was the village of Nok. The figures were made of terracotta and they all possessed a distinctive artistic style. Forms of ground stone axes and smaller stone tools, iron tools, axes and tools, were also found on the sites. Similar findings have been made imparts of Ife-Ife, Jebba, Esie, Igbo-Ukwu and Benin.

The scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies includes;

1. Major landmark in early Nigerian history
2. Nok culture/civilization
3. Benin civilization
4. Ife civilization
5. Igbo Ukwu civilization

The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic groups 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. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader that led the Yoruba to Ile-Ife and subsequently sent his sons and grandsons to find other Yoruba kingdom. Oke- Oranfe is located in Ile-Ife. It was believed to the center from which the world was created. The political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. Each consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands. Each town has a king known as “Oba” who resides in the palace called “Aafin”. He is both the spiritual head and political head of the kingdom. The Alafin was assisted in his administration by a reunite officials made up of priests, officials and eunuchs. Usually, the deposed Alafin was expected to commit suicide. Members of Oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government. It was a very powerful cult. It played a mediatory role in any conflict between the Oyomesi and the Alafin. It was a kind of counter power to the Oyomesi as well. The army was another arm of government in the Yoruba society. It is very organized and headed by Aare-Ona-Kankanfo. It was made up of infantry and cavalry. The Alafin used the Bere annual festival periods to acknowledge the renewal of allegiance of the provincial governors to him.

The Igbo people are known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is because from the ancient times, they had no centralized states. There are grouped into five sub-cultures; the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of North-Eastern Nigeria, the Western Igbo and the Northern Igbo. There were no equivalents of Oba and Alafin or of palaces over most parts of Igbo land. The family is the smallest unit in Igbo traditional society. Each family was headed by an “Ofo” title holder. Age grades were organized on a village basis. The elders enforced the elders’ decisions, and in war, guided the settlements and fights on the battle field. Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in traditional Igbo society. All the male adult members usually met in this assembly to perform legislative functions. All the decisions taken are final. Each age set had its own special rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities in matters affecting the village. The secret society consisted of the diviners’ masquerades, “Ubinuknabi” at Arochukwu the “Amadisha” of Ozuzzu and so on. The Igbo believed in re-incarnation. The religious lives of the Igbos were surrounded by mysticisms and superstitions.

Hausa land in Northern Nigeria. It is fourteen before 1804 and they were of two distinct groups. The first group consist of seven states called ‘Hausa Bakwa’, that is, Hausa legitimate state. The second consist of the remaining state that is Hausa illegitimate states. Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. The emir was an absolute monarch in his emirate. The members of this council were project officers appointed by Uthman Dan Fodio and each held a title specifying the specific functions he performed. The chief justice of the Sharia courts was called chief justice of the sharia courts was called Grand Khadi.

Britain, therefore governed Nigeria by means of a system popularly referred to as “Indirect rule”. Indirect rule may be a system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional rulers. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.