

Name : Alexandra Biobele Briggs

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A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NIGERIAN STATE

Nigeria had two historical periods and they are ***pre colonial and post colonial period***. The pre colonial period was just the period before the arrival of the colonialists. The colonial period is the time that colonial administration was introduced into the country. Before we were colonised we were made up of ***chiefdoms ,states ,kingdoms and empires***. Some examples are the Borno empire ,the Hausa States and the sokoto caliphate , the Igbo segmentary societies and the Oyo of the West. The various ethnic groups differ in ***historical, social and cultural make ups***.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

It is bordered in the south by the BIGHTS OF BENIN and BIAFRA. On the west by Benin ,on the north by Niger and on the south by Cameroon. In the extreme north eastern corner *lake Chad* separates Nigeria from Chad. It is roughly 700 miles from the west to east and 650 miles from south to north ,covering an area between 3 and 15 E longitude and between 4 and 14N latitude.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA

- It is very hard to determine when man first settled in Nigeria but there are some evidences archaeologists discovered. It has been discovered that man settled in the region called Nigeria since the Palaeolithic period around 500000 to 9000BC. Archaeologists used stone tools to determine Nigeria was around in stone age. There are
- ***EARLY STONE AGE: 300000 to 35000BC***
- ***Middle stone age (35000 to 15000bc)***
- ***Late stone age (15000 to 500BC)***

Man needed to survive so he had done many beautiful things some of them are ; *looking for food, invention of primitive tools , sculpture making e.g. Terracotta and many archaeological findings show when man settled in Nigeria.*

CENTRES OF ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS IN NIGERIA

- **NOK CIVILISATION**

They were famous for discovery of Terracotta or burnt clay by the Nok miners in 1936. More were discovered in Wamba , Kastina Ala and Jema. They are called the Nok civilisation It is seen as a middle man between stone and iron age. It existed between the 5th and 2nd century BC.

- **BENIN CIVILISATION**

Most famous for their art works (Terracotta and Bronze heads). They were carved in quartz and animal and human figures were from granite and decorated with iron nails

- **IGBO UKWU CIVILISATION**

Some bronze objects were discovered on digging a toilet pit in Igbo ukwu 1939. It eventually led Thurstan Shaw to excavate 3 sites and many objects made of bronze were discovered there. The sites were *a burial chamber, a pit and a compound wall*. The remains of a skeleton were found one was a king and his five slaves buried with him

TRADITIONAL POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN PRE COLONIAL NIGERIA

- **YORUBA**

1. Origin traces to Oduduwa and they believe their centre of creation to be Ile-Ife.
2. They have many versions of creation some are;
 - The migration of the east that us through mecca
 - The Oke Oramfe version that is Obatala and the sixteen immortals story.

The political institutions consisted of a *capital towns, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands*. Each town has an *OBA as king who stays in the palace called AAFIN, a beaded crown called ADE, slippers called BATA, irukere a horse tail and ASE a sceptre*.

- **IGBO**

The Igbo are well known for being acephalous and they had no centralised states. They had 5 sub cultures and that was the Igbo of;

1. Eastern Nigeria
2. South eastern
3. North eastern
4. Western Igbo
5. Northern Igbo

The Igbo also have many origin stories and some are ;

- Consideration of Igbo being off shoots of Hebrews who migrated south .
- The Eze Nri version which is seen as the only authentic version. It explains that he said over River Anambra and settled at Aguleri with an autochthonous group of people.

Their political structure had no centralised authority and authority was diffused into diverse groups although they were socio political institutions that performed various state functions.

THE HAUSA PEOPLE.

This is the northern part of Nigeria and was made up of 14 states before 1804. They were the legitimate of *HAUSA BAKWAI and the illegitimate BANZA BAKWAI*. They were seven each. *The Hausa BAKWAI were Daura, Rano, Kano, Biram, Zaria, Kastina and Gobir. The banza bakwai are Kebbi, Ilorin, Nupe, Zamfara, Gwari, Yauri and Bauchi.*

- **Origin story**

A Baghdad prince called Bayajidda killed a big snake in the city of DAURA and married the Queen Daurama as a reward. She already had six sons of her own and she and he produced another of their own and they became the first kings of Hausa states.

In their political structure the Sarki is the ruler of the state . The Sarkin Kasar has both spiritual and political functions and he was aided by the council of the state. Islam was introduced into Hausa around the 14th century and by the 15th century it was accepted as the ruling class religion.

COLONIALISM

- **The** British were not the first whites to come into Nigeria it was the Portuguese and they arrived through Bini kingdom.
- **It** was Trans Atlantic slave trade that brought British into contact with Nigeria and it was abolished in the 19th century. The sources of these slaves were criminals ,political prisoners and unfortunate souls sold by family members.

BIRTHING OF NIGERIA

- Due to the scramble of powers by Europeans Africa was partitioned into two by the European powers in the period of 1884 to 1885.
- By 1900 Nigeria was completely under the British administration and in 1906 it was amalgamated and this was the first done by British. It was the Lagos colony and the southern Nigeria that were amalgamated .
- **The second** amalgamation was in January 1914 into Northern and Southern protectorate. So we can therefore say that we were governed by indirect rule at this period by the British.