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CHAPTER TWO.

AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE.

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period. Nigerian state is a colonial creation. Pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent states, kingdoms and empires which includes Bornu Empire, Hausa state, Sokoto caliphate in the north, Igbo seminary societies in the east, Benin kingdom, the Oyo Empire in the west and several ethnic identities in the Benue valley. They differ in their history and culture. Nigeria is bordered by Benin on the west, Niger on the north, Cameroon on the east, Benin and Biafra on the south.

Men settled in Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9000BC. Artifacts found by archaeologists confirmed that Nigerians took part in the Stone Age, which is divided into several periods. Early Stone Age 3,000,000-35,000BC, middle Stone Age 35,000-15,000BC, late Stone Age 15,000-500BC.

Man worked so hard to cope with his environment. He needed food, so he would hunt for animals and gather fruits. He invented tools out of pebbles (chopping and cutting tools) which the called Oldowan-type tools. He advanced and made hand axes. Similar tools were made and later refined in the middle Stone Age and late Stone Age.

THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY NIGERIAN SOCIETIES.

Major landmark in early Nigerian history- information on Nigerian history can be discovered in the remote past where man lived. They include: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin. They are the centre of ancient civilization.

TRADITIONAL POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN PRE-COLONIAL NIGERIA.

The three major ethnic groups: Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani.

YORUBA

Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Yoruba land- The Yoruba’s are one of the largest ethnic groups and are united by language. The origin of Yoruba is traced to Oduduwa the founder of the Yoruba kingdom. Ile-ife is the ancestral home of the Yoruba. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader who lead Yoruba people to Ile-ife and sent his sons to find other Yoruba kingdoms.

The Oke Oramfe’s version of the origin of the Yoruba- Oke Oramfe is located in Ile-ife. It is believed to be the centre from which the world was created. Once, the world was covered by water then the almighty God decided to send Obatala or Orisa Nla or Orisa Alase as the leader and sixteen Oye (immortals).

Political structure of the pre-colonial Yoruba land- Each town has a king known as Oba, who is both the spiritual and political head of the kingdom. He enjoys many privileges nut there are limitations to his power called eewo. Once violated could lead to his death. He had lesser rulers in charge of the subordinate towns. The Baale – the third rank in charge of villages. The oloja- the fourth rank, ruled over the farmlands. The town was the basic unit while the subordinate towns were the bedrock. The town was divided into compounds (agbo ile) under the compound head known as Baale. Each compound is a group of patrilineal related people known as Idile, headed by the most senior male member of the family.

The Oyo Empire is an example of the pre-colonial administration. It has its organ: the Alaafin administration, the ogboni cult administration and the army.

IGBO

The Igbo are grouped into five sub culture: The Igbo Eastern Nigeria, Igbo of South Eastern Nigeria, Igbo of North Eastern Nigeria, the Western Igbo and the Northern Igbo.

Political structure of the Igbo land- There’s no highly centralized authority as they had diffusion of authority into groups and practiced direct democracy. The family is the smallest unit headed by an Ofo title header. Among the Ofo title holders, one of them is recognized as the most senior to others known as Okpara. Who held the Ozo title and presided over the council of elders meeting where issues affecting the lives of the people were discussed. Age grade was organized on a village basis; the association or age grade grew from childhood and took a common name to commemorate an event associated with the time of their birth. Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in the traditional Igbo society.

HAUSA

Before 1804, Hausa land was made up of fourteen states, two distinct groups. The first group consists of seven states, called “Hausa Bakwai”, Hausa legitimate state. The second consist of the remaining seven states called “Hausa Banza”, Hausa illegitimate state. The Bakwai are Daura, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Kano, Rano and Gobir while the Hausa Banza states are Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi, and Yoruba. Hausa is located in the Northern Nigeria. Islam was not introduced to the region until the seventh scale.

Political structure of the Pre-colonial Hausa land- Sarki is the head of any typical Hausa state. Sarkin Kasar, which means ruler of the land, is the title given to any efficient Head of Hausa state. He is also the chief executive and judge of the state. Between 14th and 15th centuries, the socio political organization of Hausa states took another shape.

Emirate system of Government among the Hausa people- Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the 14th century and was accepted in the 15th century as the religion of the ruling class. In every state the former ruler was replaced by a Fulani Emir. Important title holders in the Emirs cabinet Included:

1. Sarkin Fada- The spokesman of the Emir and organizer of the palace workers.
2. Waziri- the prime minister of the Emirate.
3. Galadima- the Administrator of the capital city.
4. Madawaki- The commander and Head of the Emirate Army.
5. Magaji- Government Treasurer in charge of the government treasury.
6. Sarkin Dan Doka- Inspector General of Police Force called Dan Doka
7. Sarkin Ruwa- Minister in charge of Water Resources or the river fishing official.
8. Sarkin Pawa- Head of Chairman of Butchers at the Abattoirs.
9. Yari- Chief Superintendent of Prisons in the Emirate.

Colonial Administration of the Indirect Rule System in Nigeria

Historical Backgrou0nd.

The British who have often been credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria .The Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive Nigeria through Bini Kingdom. According to Hodgk in the second half of the country saw the arrival of the first Europeans in Bini, the Portuguese Ruy de Sedueira in 1472.it became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of the Portuguese, In 1441, a Portuguese voyager, Gonzales presented 10 African slaves to prince Henry the navigator as gifts. By 1460, about 700 to 800 slaves were exported annually to Portugal from West Africa. The trans-Atlantic slave trade was channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria.

THE BIRTH OF NIGERIA AS A GEO-POLITICAL ENTITY

Before the year 1900, all the different parts of Nigeria conquered by the British were still under their original administration. But by 1906, the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British colonial officer. The May amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British government amalgamation of Lagos colony with the protectorate of southern Nigeria to form the new colony and protectorate of southern Nigeria. The second amalgamation was in 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and southern Nigeria. The principle reason for this is the same as that of May 1906. The northern protectorate was not as economically buoyant as the colony and protectorate of southern Nigeria. Sir Frederick Lugard is best known as the father of the January 1914 amalgamation. Britain, therefore, governed Nigeria by means of a system popularly referred to as indirect rule. Indirect rule may be is a system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional rulers. The British officers defined the framework of the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.