NAME: OHIOMOBA BRITELLE IJEOMA

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ASSIGNMENT: IN ABOUT A 3-PAGE REVIEW CHAPTER TWO,’’AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF NIGERIAN STATE”.

The historical background of Nigeria involves the pre-colonial and the colonial period in Nigeria. The Nigerian state is a colonial creation. Before the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre- colonial Nigeria comprises of chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These includes; Borno Empire, the Hausa States, and the Sokoto Caliphate in the North; the Igbo segmentary societies in the East; Benin Kingdom and the Oyo Empire in the West and several ethnic identities in the Benue valley. Nigeria is bordered to the south by the Bights of Benin and Biafra, which are on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. On the west, Nigeria is bordered by Benin, on the north, by Niger, and on the east, by Cameroon. In its extreme north-eastern corner, Lake Chad separates Nigeria from the country of Chad. Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from west to east and 650 miles from south to north, covering an area between 30 and 150 E longitude and between 40 and 140 N latitude.

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but 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 Palaeolithic period 500,000- 9000BC. The artefacts, mostly stone tools, found by archaeologists confirm that Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilisation. The Stone Age can be divided into several periods. These are: Early Stone Age 3,000,000- 35,000BC; Middle Stone Age, 35,000-15,000BC and; Late Stone Age, 15,000-500BC.

Inventions of Early men includes; hunting of animals in fruits in order to get food, invention of tools with pebbles in which the Archeaologist call Oldowan-type tools. This tool was oval pointed in shape. Man later invented another tool called heavy chopper. Also known as Sagoan. Information on where man lived was made possible by evacuation work done in those places. Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. These places are known to as” CENTRES OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION”.

YORUBA HISTORY

The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic groups and they trace their origin to Oduduwa who is the founder of Yoruba kingdom. Ile-Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people. There are different versions Yoruba civilization. There is the story of their migration from the East. This is the belief that the Yoruba people migrated from the North-East. So from Mecca, through Egypt leading to a final settlement in Ile-Ife. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader that led the the Yoruba to Ile-ife. The Oke Oramfe’s version of Yoruba civilization is that the earth was full of water at a time, and God, Olodumare, sent servants which included Obatala or Orisa-Nla and sixteen oye (immortals) who were given some objects with which the world was created. They were given five pieces of iron, a lump of earth tied to a white piece of cloth and a cockerel. On their way, Obatala got drunk with palmwine. Oduduwa seized the symbol of authority from him and eventually led the party to the world.

Political Structures of Yoruba Land

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.” His paraphernalia of office included a beaded crown (Ade), a slippers (bata), horse tail (irukere) and sceptre Ase). The Oba is both the spiritual and political head of the kingdom.

Igbo History

The Igbo people are known for their acephalous way of life because they had no centalised state. According Nri version, the ancestor of igbo, Eri, descended from the sky and sailed down River Anambra. When he arrived in Aguleri, he met some autochthonous group of people who had no living memory of their own and settled with me. As the population increased, some groups migrated to other parts of Igboland to establish their settlements.

Political Structure in Igbo Land is; They have no centralized state and they practice decentralized system of government. They have institutions who perform legislative and executive functions and they include family, age group, secret societies and council of elders.

Hausa Land History

Hausa land is located in Northern Nigeria. Hausa land, before 1804 was made up of fourteen states, and they were of two distinct groups. The first group consist of seven states called “Hausa Bakwai” states, that is, Hausa legitimate states. The second group consist of the remaining seven states and were known as “Hausa banza” states, that is Hausa illegitimates states. The Hausa “bakwai” states are Daura, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Kano, Rano, and Gobir while the Hausa “Banza” states are Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi.

Origin of Hausa people

Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda, an Arab prince who travelled to the Sahel from Baghdad. He killed a monstrous snake that oppressed the people of Daura, and he married the queen. The queen had six sons already, and she produced another son with Bayajidda, and each of these sons ruled one of the seven Hausa city-states, becoming the first kings. The combined kingdoms of Hausa land were sometimes called the Daura, since Daura is the place where Bayajidda supposedly founded the Hausa people.

Political Structure

The “Sarki” was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organised court. Sarkin Kasar, which means “ruler of the land,” was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of Hausa State. The Sarkin Kasar combined both political and religious/spiritual functions. He was also the chief executive and judge of the State, but he was aided by a council of state. At the district level, the government was modelled after that at the national level. It is worthy of note that between 14th and 15th centuries, the socio-political organisation of Hausa States took another shape. For instance, Islam was adopted and this gave birth to many new political institutions such as the offices of the Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Dogari, Yari Sarki and Sarki Yau.

Islam Among Hausa People

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.

Colonial Administration of Nigeria

•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.

•Thus, The Trans-Atlantic slave trade was the unfortunate channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria.

•The Trans-Atlantic slave trade was abolished in the 19th century

The Partition of Africa

•The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. Each of the European powers was given the opportunity to establish colonies where it had vested interest. The scramble for Africa, by these European powers led to the partitioning of Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884–85.

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 1900, the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British Colonial Office. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British government amalgamated Lagos colony and protectorate with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria to form the new colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

The Second Amalgamation

The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria.