NAME: ADIKWU OCHANYA ROSELINE

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CHAPTER TWO; A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE.

When we want to talk about Nigeria government and politics we have to involve the pre-colonial and colonial period that happened in Nigeria. As we know, pre-colonial era is the time before the colonial masters came and colonial period is the period when they ruled us in Nigeria.

Nigeria was made from colonization and before these colonialist came we have our own ruling system and authorities, it comprised of different states, empires and so on. We have places like the Hausa states, Borno Empire and so on. We had kings and traditional religious leaders. The name Nigeria was gotten from the girlfriend of Lord Lugard miss Flora Shaw, she called ‘NIGER AREA’ and that’s how the name was made.

The period when man started leaving in Nigeria is not really known but then it was seen to be around the Palaeolithic period 500,000-9000BC. The earliest men created tools used to hunt their food, they lived a savagery life. They hunted animals and gathered fruits to eat. These tools were used during the early Stone Age but as time went on they started improving on their own pace, creating bigger and better equipment.

Nigeria was divided into the West, East, North and south. These four places have states under them and sometimes have a particular language spoken.

In the West we have the yoruba’s, they speak Yoruba as their language and these includes states like ogun, osun, lagos, oyo etc. they are the third largest group in Nigeria. They trace their existence to oduduwa who was the founder of the kingdom. Ile ife is known as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people.

Each town was known to have a king called the oba who was to lead them. He had other lesser rulers who assisted him in his activities, they were in charge of the subordinate town and wore crows made of white beads known as ‘ sese ofun’.

In the East we have the igbo people with igbo as their spoken language, they are the second largest group in Nigeria and they are known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life.

They have five sub cultures;

1. Igbo of the eastern Nigeria
2. Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria
3. Igbo of north-eastern Nigeria
4. Western Igbo
5. Northern Igbo

There is a popular story of the migration stories of the origin of the Igbo people which is that that points to Israel. This was said because of the similarities between the Igbo culture and Hebrew.

In the Igbo traditional society, there was no highly centralised authority but instead, they had what could be called diffusion of authority into different groups. In other words they practised direct democracy or a decentralised system of government.

In the North we have the Hausa’s, which is the main language spoken there. Before 1804 it had fourteen states of two distinct groups. The hausa bakwai which is the legitimate seven consisting of Daura, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Kano,Rano and Gobir while the second group called the Banza bakwai which is the illegitimate seven consists of Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi.

That had a traditional leader called ‘sarki’ known as head of all hausa land, they also had other people giving duties in other to achieve efficient result.