

The book is telling us that the precolonial and colonial period in Nigeria is significant in the historical background of Nigeria government and politics. Precolonial period is the coming before the colonialist and the colonial period was the era that colonial administration was established in Nigeria.

Nigeria is a colonial creation. It is a product of a historical arrangement that arose out of European adventure with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, precolonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These, among others, include the 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. These ethnic groupings significantly differ in their historical, social and cultural make ups. The country 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 northeastern 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 3 degree and 15 s E longitude and between 4 degree and 14 degree latitude.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA.

The exact time man has been living in Nigeria hasn't been recorded 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 further confirmed that Nigerian also took part in the stone-age civilization.

The excavation of a stone age skeleton at Iwo Eleru near Akure in Ondo state has thrown more light on the earliest occupation of Nigeria.

The Achievements of Early Men.

The environment that time wasn't all that so the man who lived in Nigeria then had to cope with his environment. The book told us that he needed food, for this purpose he started to hunt for food. He then invented tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools.

In 500BC to 200AD, people who lived in Nigeria were sculptors. Many were of human heads and figures. They varied greatly in size, from small sized objects of only two and a half centimetres to huge objects.

Major landmark in early Nigerian history.

Information on the major land marks in early Nigeria history was made possible through the excavation work done on the places where man lived in Nigeria in the remote past. Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included: Nok, Igbo ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. They are usually referred to as centers of ancient civilization. The history of these centers of ancient civilization presents us with the scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies.

Traditional political institution in pre colonial Nigeria

In this section the three majority ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria traditional political system of government shall be examined.

Historical background of pre colonial political system in the Yoruba land

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. There are different versions of the traditions of origin.

Political structure of the the pre colonial Yoruba land

The political structures of the Yoruba kingdom 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 ALAFIN.

Oyo empire

The government of the old Oyo empire is a typical example of the precolonial administration in Yorubaland. The first organ of government in Oyo empire was the king known as Alaafin Oyo. Under the Oyo empire there was the Alaafin administration, the Ogboni cults administration, the army.

Historical background of pre colonial political system in Igbo land

The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is because from the ancient times, they had no centralised states. Consequently, they operated a kind of government without kings. The Igbo are grouped into five subcultures:

- The Igbo of eastern Nigeria
- The Igbo of south eastern Nigeria
- The Igbo of North eastern Nigeria
- The western Igbo and
- The Northern Igbo

Historical background of pre colonial political system in land

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 consists of seven states called Hausa Bakwai states that is Hausa legitimacy states. The second group consists of the remaining seven states and were known as Hausa Banza states, that is Hausa illegitimate states.

Political structure of the pre colonial Hausa land

The Sarki was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well organized 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.