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Review of Chapter 2 (AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE)

Nigeria’s political background includes the pre-colonial (before the arrival of colonialists) and colonial periods (when the colonial administration had control over the affairs of the country). The precolonial Nigeria consisted of independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires such as Borno Empire, Hausa states and Benin Kingdom among others. They differ historically, socially and culturally. Nigeria is bordered by the bights of Benin and Biafra in the South, Benin in the West, Niger in the North and Cameroon in the East, Lake Chad also separates Nigeria from the country, Chad.

Evidence shows that man may have been present on Nigerian soil since the Palaeolithic period (500000-9000BC). Artefacts and Stone tools found, suggest that Nigerians took part in the stone age civilization which lasted from about 3,000,000 – 500BC.

Man needed certain things to survive those days, among the things needed was food. He hunted animals and gathered fruits. He invented tools from pebbles which archaeologists refer to as Oldowan-type tools. This is because this type of tool was first discovered in Olduvia Gorge in Tanazia. In the early stone age small stone tools believed to be used for hunting were located in Jos. Man also made a heavy chopper first seen at Sango Bay on the west shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda, East Africa. As man progressed in the middle stone age, late stone age, bronze and metal age, he made sculptures, many were of human heads and figures. Some were found at the village of Nok.

Major landmark in Early Nigerian History

The history of Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others (The centres of Ancient Civilization) presents us with the scientific and bechnological developments of early Nigerian societies.

(Nok culture, Benine, Ife, and Igbo Ukwu civilization)

A terracottal (burnt clay) head of a monkey was discovered by tin miners in Nok in 1936. It is believed to be a transactional civilization between the Stone Age and Iron Age in Nigerian. This is the Nok culture civilization.

Benin civilization is known for its art work. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory. Ife civilization is known for its bronze heads. They are believed to have originated from the Nok culture. Objects were carved on head stone called Quartz while animal and human figures were carved from granibe. Igbo Ukkw civilization; three sites were excavated after bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. The sites include a burial chamber, a pit and a compound wall, dated to the middle of the 9th century AD.

Traditionally, political intuition in pre-colonial Nigerian

There are three major ethnic groups; Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa-Fulani Yoruba

The Yoruba trace their origin to oduduwa, Ile-Ife is regarded as their ancestral home. They have two stories about their origin: The story of their migration from the East and The Oke Orannfe’s version.

They had similar political structures each consisting of a capital towns, subordinates towns, villages and farmlands. Each town has a king known as oba, e.g. The Oyo Empire which consists of: The Alaafin Administration, The Ogboni cultist Administration and The Army.

The Igbo are divided into five sub-cultures. The most popular versions of their migratory story of origin is the one that points to Isreal. There is also the Nri version. They do not have a centralized authority.

The Hausa land is located in Nigerian. They are made up of fourteen states of two distinct group; The Hausa Bakwai states and the Hausa legitimate state. Their origin is traced to a man named Bayajidda, an Arab prince who travelled to the state from Baghdad. The emirate system of Government among the Hausa people: Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century, by fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The Emir was an absolute monarch in his emirate, he was the political, administrative and spiritual leader. The Emir controlled economic activities within his emirates. The members of the council were project officers appointed by ‘Uthman Dan Fodio and each held a tittle and perform a specific function which include; Sarkin Fada, Waziri, Galadima, Madawaki, etc.

The colonial administration and the indirect rule in Nigerian

The British who have often been credited with the creation of Nigerian were not the frist Europeans to land in Nigerian. The Atlantic slave trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic ocean between the Europeans and Africans. It became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of Portuguese. After three century of shameful slave trade, came the so called period of legitimate commerce. This was another golden opputunity for the Europeans to get more directly involved in the affair of the African state.

The birth of Nigeria as a Geo Political Entity

Before the year 1900, all the different parts of Nigeria conquered by British were still under their original administration. The May 1906 Amalgamated is known as the first ever amalgamation Lagos colony and Protectorate of s Southern Nigerian to form the new colony of southern Nigeria. The Second Amalgamation was that of 1914 in January the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria. The principal reason for this is the same as that of May 1906. Sir Frederick Lugard is best known as the father of the January 1914 amalgamation. Britain therefore, governed Nigerian by means of a system popularly referred as “Indirect Rule”. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.