

Name : Nwoga Thelma Ozichukwu

Matric number: 19/MHS01/265

Department: Medicine and surgery

GST 203 : Government

Chapter 2.

A Histological Analysis Of The Evolution Of The Nigeria State .

The historical background of Nigerian and politics involves the pre colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. The pre colonial period being the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country.

The Nigerian state is a colonial creation. It is a product of a historical arrangement that arose out of the European adventure with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms , states , kingdoms and empires. Ethnic groupings significantly differ in their historical, social and cultural make ups. The country 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 Chad.

Early Man in Nigeria

The exact time when men 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 Paleolithic period. The artifacts mostly stone tools, found by archeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the Stone Age civilization.

The achievements of Early man

The early man needed food, for this purpose he began to hunt animals and gather fruits.

He began to invent tools consisting of pebbles and made them into chopping and cutting tools . Archeologists called the tools the Oldowan- type tools because this type of tool was fist identified by the archeologists in the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. Early man in Nigeria advanced from the early Stone Age. But his tools were later refined in the middle age and late Stone Age

Early man then proceeded to invent another type of tool which is a heavy chopper. It is more efficient than the existing tools then .

Thought there is evidence of more advanced technology in various parts of Nigeria during the bronze and metal Age.

Forms of ground stone axes and smaller stone tools , iron axes and tools were also found on sites which was the Nok village . Similar findings have been made in parts of Ile- Ife, Jebba, Esie, Igbo-Ukwu and Benin.

Major Landmark in Early Nigerian History

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

Nok culture / civilization

The discovery of a terracotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places such as Wamba, Katsina Ala and Jema. The areas where these were found is called the Nok culture or civilization area.

Benin Civilization

The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass. Art historians claim that bronze casting was introduced into Benin by an Ife artist.

Ife civilization

Objects such as stools and figures were carved on hard stone called quartz while human and animal figures were carved on granite and decorated with iron nails.

Igbo Ukwu civilization

Some bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to the excavation of three sites in the area.

Historical background of pre colonial political system in Yoruba land

The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria and are United by one language . The Yoruba people trace their origins to Oduduwa who was the founder of the Yoruba kingdom . Ile ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader that led the Yoruba to Ile ife and subsequently sent his sons and grandsons to found other Yoruba kingdoms .

Political structure of the pre colonial Yoruba land .

The Yoruba kingdoms each had a capital town, subordinate towns , villages and farmlands. Each town had an Oba who resides in the Aafin. The oba enjoyed many privileges but certain limitations were placed on his power designed to curb the despotism and tyranny on the part of the king. The king also had rulers of lesser ranks. The pattern of administration was hierarchical . At the lowest level were the compound head.

The Oyo Empire:

The government of the old Oyo empire is a typical example of the pre colonial administration in Yoruba land. It comprised of the (1) Alaaifin administration

(2) The Ogboni Cult's administration

(3) The Army

Historical background of the pre colonial political system in Igbo land

The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary way of life. This is because from the ancient

times, they had no centralized states. The Igbo are grouped into five sub cultures:

The Igbo of the eastern Nigeria

The Igbo of the southern eastern Nigeria

The Igbo of the northern eastern Nigeria

The western Igbo

The northern Igbo

One of the most popular versions of the migratory stories of origins of the Igbo people is the one that points to Israel. This assumption is based on the so called similarities between the cultures of the Igbo and the ancient Hebrew.

Political structure of the pre colonial Igbo land

They practiced direct democracy because there were no traditional rulers as in the case of the Yorubas . Although there was no highly centralized authority, some socio political institutions existed in each villages to perform legislative, executive, administrative, military and judicial functions such as institutions included the family , council of elders, age grade and secret societies.

Historical background of pre colonial political system in the Hausa land

Hausa land is located in northern Nigeria. Hausa land before 1804 was made up of 14 states and they were two distinct groups. The first consists of the “Hausa Bakwai “ states, that is to say the Hausa legitimate states. The second group consists of the remaining seven states known as the Hausa Banza states, that is to say the Hausa legitimate 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 efficient and effective head of the Hausa state.

—Colonial administration and indirect rule system in Nigeria Historical Background

The British who have been credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria. The Portuguese were the first European to arrive Nigeria through Bini kingdom. In 1482, a Portuguese voyager, Goncalves presented ten African slaves to Prince Henry the Navigator as gifts. By 1482, about 700 to 800 slaves were exported annually to Portugal from west Africa . Sources of slaves included condemned criminals, political prisoners, victims of kidnapping and relatives sold to redeem debts. The trans Atlantic slave trade was the unfortunate 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 1900, the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British colonial office. The first amalgamation of the British in Nigeria was in the May 1906 and the second was that of 1914 January. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be

adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel of the rulers.