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### **AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE**

The history of the Nigerian government can be divided into the pre-colonial and colonial period. The precolonial period is the time before the coming of colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administrations were established in the country. Nigeria is a colonial creation; it rose out of Europe adventure with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. Precolonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms, and empire. These ethnic groupings significantly differ in their historical, social, and cultural make-up.

#### **EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA**

The exact time man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archeological evidence from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to fact that man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9000BC. Man, who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment. And man evolved from the early stone age.

#### **The scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies**

Major landmarks in early Nigerian history which include Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin are usually referred to as the center of ancient civilizations. Their history presents us with the scientific and technological developments of early Nigerian society.

##### **Nok culture/civilization**

Terracotta head of a monkey was discovered in miners in Nok in 1936 which prompted more discoveries. It is believed to be a transitional civilization between stone and iron ages in Nigeria because of the presence of a combination of stone and iron objects, it was discovered through carbon dating that Nok culture existed between the fifth and second century.

##### **Benin Civilization**

Benin was important for its artwork. the craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass.

##### **Ife Civilization**

Ife is important because of its terracotta heads. Art historians believe that ife art originated from Nok culture because of the similarities between them especially beaded neck, wrists, and ankles. They also believe that Benin learnt bronze work from ife.

##### **Igbo Ukwu Civilization**

Some bronze objects and ornament were accidentally found in Igbo Ukwu while digging a pit toilet in 1939. This led to the excavation of three sites in the area by an archeologist Thurstan Shaw, the sites excavated have been dated to the middle ninth century A.D.

## **Traditional political institutions in pre-colonial Nigeria**

This section is talking about the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria namely Igbo, Yoruba Hausa-Fulani.

### **Historical background of pre-colonial political system In Yoruba land**

The Yoruba's are one of the largest ethnic groups and are united by language. The Yoruba people trace their origin back 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 political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. Each consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages, and farmlands each town with its own king known as Oba who resides in the palace called Aafin. His paraphernalia of office included a beaded crown (ade), a slipper (bata), horse tail (irukere) and scepter (ase).the oba had complete authority over the state but there were limitations to the power called ewo which could lead to his death when broken.

The Oyo empire

the first organ of government in the oyo empire was the king Alaaafin of Oyo.

(I)The Alaaafin Administration: Oyo empire was incredibly unique and exceptional in its system of government. In the 16th century, Oyo was one of the rare empires that had in-built checks and balances, and this contributed to its stability for centuries.

(II)The Ogboni Cult's Administration: it played a mediatory in any conflict between the Oyomesi and the Alaaafin. It was a kind of counter power to the Oyomesi as well.

(III)The Army: the army head was conferred with the coveted title of Ara-Ona-Kankafo. It is made up of infantry and cavalry. The army was created for performing important functions which included stability of the empire, expansion as well as keeping dissident territories in check.

### **Historical Background of Pre-colonial Political System in Igbo Land**

Igbo people are well known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life because from their ancient times they had no centralized states.

Igbo is grouped into 5 subcultures

I. The Igbo Eastern Nigerian. II. The Igbo South Eastern Nigeria III. The Igbo North-Eastern Nigeria IV. The Western Igbo Nigeria V. The Northern Igbo.

Some Igbo scholars consider themselves as off shoots of the lost tribes of the Hebrews who migrated southward. In Igbo traditional society, the practice direct democracy and or a decentralized system of government because there was a no traditional ruler. Each family was headed by an 'Ofo'. The family sees itself as having one common ancestors. Age grade was organized on a village basis. The association or age grade grew from childhood and took a common name to commemorate an event associated with time or birth. The Igbo believe in reincarnation. The religious lives of the Igbos were surrounded by mysticisms and superstition.

Historical Background of Pre-colonial Political System in the Hausa Land.

Hausa land is in Northern Nigeria. Hausa land, before 1840 was made up of fourteen states and they were of two distinct groups. The first first group consists of seven states called "Hausa Bakwai" states. They are the legitimate states. The second group consists of the remaining seven states known as "Hausa Banza". They are the illegitimate states.

Political Structure of The Pre-colonial Hausa Land

The Sarki was known as the head of typical Hausa State. He worked a retinue of official in a well-organized court. Sarkin Karsa which means 'ruler of the land' was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of The Hausa State.

Emirates System of Government Among the Hausa People

Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the 14th century and was accepted in the 15th century. Village heads settled minor disputes in their village, but more serious and criminal cases were referred to the Emir for Finland adequate settlement.

Colonial Administration and Indira Rule System in Nigeria Historical Background

The British who have often been credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first European to land in Nigeria but the Portuguese through Bini Kingdom. The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the portioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. Each European Power given the opportunity to establish colonies where it had invested interest. Britain colonized Nigeria. As of 1898, the British government sought to establish and maintain a colonial state in Nigeria.

### The Birth of Nigeria As A Geo-Political Entity

Before the year 1900, all parts of Nigeria conquered by the British were still under original administration. By 1900 the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British council office. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the ever first amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British government amalgamated Lagos colony and protectorate with the protectorate of southern Nigeria to form New Colony. The Second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria with the same reason as May 1906. The British offices defined the frame with the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the bullets.