**NAME : OLATOMIWA PRECIOUS OLANIKE**

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**A REVIEW ON THE HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE.**

The Nigerian state 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. The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. The pre-colonial period is the period before the coming of the colonialist to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria.

Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of kingdoms, empires, states and independent chiefdoms. These among include the *Borno empire, the hausa states, and the sokoto caliphate in the North; the igbo segementary societies in the East; benin kingdom and the oyo empire in the west and the several ethnic identities in the Benue Valley.*

Nigeria 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 borderd by Benin, on the north, by Niger, and on the east by Cameroon. In its extreme northeastern corner, Lake Chad seperates Nigeria from the country of Chad. Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from the west to east and 650 miles from south to north, covering an area between 3 degrees and 15 degrees E longitude and between 4 and 14 degrees N latitude.

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidence from the different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now as Nigeria since the Palaeolithic period 500,000-900,000BC. The artefacts mostlt stone tool that were found by archaeologists further confirmed that Nigeria also took parts in the stone age civilization. The stone-age can be divided into several periods. These are: Early stone age 3,000,000-35,000BC; Middle age, 35,000-15,000BC and the late stone age, 15,000-500BC. The excavation of a stone age skeleton at two Iwo Eleru near Akure in Ondo state has thrown more light on the earliest occupation of Nigeria. The skeleton was dated some 12,000 years ago, and this suggests that the country has been long inhabited. Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included; *Nok, igboUkwu, ife and Benin among others.* They are usually referred to as **centres of ancient civlisation.**

***THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EARLY MEN INCLUDE;***

* Invention of tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools: this was because he needed food and man began to hunt animals and to gather fruits. Archaeologist called the tools **the Oldowan-type tools.** This is because these tools were first identified by the archeologists in the **Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania.** The early tools include; hand axes, small stone tools, heavy chopper, etc.
* ***Sculpture making :*** Around 500BC to 200AD, there were people in Nigeria who started making sculptures. Many of them were of human heads and figures. They were of different sizes. The sites in which these figures were found was in the **Village of Nok**—Nok culture or civilization area.The figures were made of ***Terracota*** and they all had distinctive artisitic style. Similar findings have been made in parts of ile-ife, jebba, Esie, igbo-Ukwu and Benin.
* ***Excavation:***Benin was important for its art work. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass.Ife is important because of its terracotta and bronze heads. Objects such as stools and figures were carved on hard stone called quartz while animal and human figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails. Some bonze objects and ornaments were accidently discovered while digging toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to the *excavation* of three sites in the area by an archaeologist called a **Thurstan Shaw.** The three sites included a *burial chamber, a pit and a compound wall.*

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PRE- COLONIAL SYSTEM IN YORUBA**

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 Yoruba origin. ***Oke Oramfe*** is located in ile-ife. It is believed to be the centre from whichb the world was created. In this version, there was a period when the world was covered in water. The almighty God sent some of his messengers to the world and they included *Obatala*(as the leader) and the 16 *Oye* (immortals). They were given 5 pieces of iron, a lump of earth tied to a white cloth and a cockerel. On the way to the world, obatala got drunk with palmwine and oduduwas seized the symbol of authority. The site on which they landed is traditionally known as OKE ORAMFE IN ILE IFE. On arrival at the site. Oduduwa set down the 5 pieces of iron and placed the lump of earth with its feet throughout the earth. Consequently, the earth was formed and oduduwa became the ruler.

The political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. Each town has a king known as *oba* who resides in the palace called *Aafin*. The oba is both the spiritual and poltical head of the kingdom. He had lesser surbordinates which includes the **baale and the oloja.** The town (ilu) was the basic political unit. The pattern of administration was hierarchical.

The government of the old oyo empire is a typical example of the pre-colonial administration in Yoruba land. The first organ of government was the king known as Alaafin of oyo. The Alaafin was the head of the empire and was resident in the capital. His powers were limited by the OYOMESI headed by BASHORUN who acted as the prime minister. The oyomesi were kingmakers as well. The membersof the oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government known as the OGBONI CULT ; it was a very powerful cult. They settle conflict between the Alaafin and the oyomesi. The army was another arm of government headed by the Are-Ona-Kankanfo.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM IN IGBO LAND**

The igbo people are best known for their acephalous or segmentary way of life. This is because in ancient times, they had no centralized states. They are grouped into 5 sub-cultures which include; ***igbo of eastern, south-eastern, north-eastern, western igbo and northern igbo.*** There was no highly centralized authority but they had diffusion of authority into different groups. Family was the smallest unit; Age grade was organized on a village basis; oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly; elders formed the core of village administration; the secret societies consisted of diviners’ masquerade; they performed rituals and offered sacrifices with ther aid of a chief priest. They believed in re-incarnation. Their religious lives were surrounded by mysticisms and superstitions.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSYTEM IN HAUSA 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', i.e. Hausa legitimate states. The second group consists of the remaining seven states 'Hausa Banza', i.e. Hausa illegitimate states. Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda, An Arab prince who travelled to the Sahel from Baghdad. He killed a monstrous snake that oppressed the people of Daura and he married the queen. The queen had six sons already and produced another son with Bayajidda, and each of these sons ruled one of the seven Hausa city-states,becoming the first kings. Islam was not introduced to the region until the eleventh century. The 'Sarki' was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organized court. Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. Every state was headed by the Fulani Emir who was assisted by a council whichh consisted project officers appointed by Dan fodio and each held a title with specific functions. The judicial administration of Hausa-fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called sharia

**COLONIAL ADMINISRATION AND INDIRECT RULE SYSTEM IN NIGERIA**

The Portugese were the first Europeans to land in Nigeria, through the Bini Kingdom in 1472 in Ewuare's reign and in 1484 in Ozolua's reign. The Atlantic slave trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic ocean between the Europeans and Africans. Demand for slaves could be traced to the introduction of plantation system of agriculture in places like Brazil, Jamaica and Haiti among others. After three centuries of shameful slave trade, came the so-called period of legitimate commerce. As from 1898, the British government sought to establish and maintain a colonial state in Nigeria. To achieve this, measures were taken, for example, the expansion and consolidation of British authority over the territory later known as Nigeria. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British goverment amalgamated the Lagos colony and protectorate with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria to form the new protectorate of Southern Nigeria. The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, the British goverment amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria.