NAME: OLIVEIRAOKORIE UZAMAKA UCHEWNA

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 INTRODUCTION

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 colonisation of Africa. Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, state, kingdoms and empires. These among others include the Borno Empire,the hausa states,and the sokoto caliphate in the north and several ethnic identities in the benue valley.

 Early Man in Nigeria

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaelogical evidence from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now known as Nigerian since the Palaeolithic period 500,000-9000BC

 The Achievement of Early Man

There is evidence of more advanced technology in various parts of Nigeria during the bronze and metal age. Indeed, one of the most active periods of the technological efforts in Nigeria was during this period, around 500BC to 200AD.

 Major Landmark in the Early Nigerian History

Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included; Nok, Igbo ukwu, Ife and Benin among others

1. Nok culture/civilization; it is believed to be a transitional civilisational between the stone age and iron age in Nigeria
2. Benin civilization; it is very important for its art-work
3. Ife civilization; it is important because of its terracotta and bronze head
4. Igbo ukwu civilization; some bronze objects and ornament were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo ukwu in 1939.

 Traditional political institutions in pre-colonial Nigeria

Three major majority ethnic groups of yoruba,Igbo and Hausa-fulani in Nigerian traditional political system of government shall be examined

 Political system in Yoruba land

The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigerian and are united by language. The yoruba people trace their origin to Oduduwa who was founder of the yoruba kingdom.Ile-Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the yoruba people

The Oke Oramfe’s version of the origin of the yoruba; it is located in Ile-Ife. It is believed to be the centre from which the world was created

Each town has a king known as ‘Oba’ who resides in the palace called ‘Aafin’.The Oba enjoyed many privileges but certain limitations were placed on his powers. And these limitations are known as ‘Eewo’’ and were designed to curb the despotism and tyranny on the part of the king. If the king violates any ‘Eewo’ it could lead to death

The king also had other rulers of lesser rank and status.the lesser rulers were in charge of the subordinate towns and wore crowns made of white beads known as ‘Sese ofun’

 Political System in Igbo Land

The Igbo people are known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is because from the ancient times,they had no centralised states the Igbos are sub-divided into 5 groups

1. Igbo of eastern Nigeria
2. Igbo of South-eastern Nigeria
3. Igbo of north-eastern Nigeria
4. The western
5. The northern igbo

One of the most popular version of the igbos is the one that points to the isreal. In the igbo tradition society, there was no highly centralised authority but instead they had what could be called a diffusion of authority into different groups. The family was the smallest political unit in Igbo traditional society.

 Political system 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 groups consist of seven states called ‘Hausa bakwai’ states which include Daura,Biram,Zaria, Katsina,Rano,and Gobir. The second group consist of the remaining seven states called Hausa banza states which are nupe,gwari,yauri,bauchi,zamfara ,kebbi, yoruba.

 Political structure of the pre-colonial hausa land

The ‘sarki’was known asthe head of any typical hausa state. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organised court. Sarkin kasar, which means ‘ ruler of the land,’was the full tittle given to any effective and efficient head of hausa state.

 Emirate system of government among the hausa people

Islam was introduced to hausa land in the fourtheen century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class.The jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 futher strengthened and consolidated thev religion in this area

Important tittle holders in the emirs cabinet include

1. Sarkin fada- the spokeman of the emir and organiser of the palace workers
2. Waziri- the prime minister of the emirate
3. Galadima- the adminstrator of the capital city
4. Madawaki- the commander and head of the emirate army
5. Magaji-government treasurer in-charge of the government treasury
6. Sarkin dan doka- inspector general of police force called dan doka
7. Sarkin ruwa- minister in-charge of water resources or the river fishing official
8. Sarkin pawa-head of chairman of butchers at the abbattoirs
9. Yari- chief superintendent of prisons in the emirate

 Futhermore, to make the local government efficient, and effective each emirates was divided into districts and an official known as ‘hakimi’ was appointed by the emir to reside at the headquarters and adminster the district on behalf of the emir. Each district was further subdivided into villages , each village into wards, for administrative purposes.however,they settled minor cases, customary case inheritance and divorce but were obliged to refer all serious cases to alkali courts at the state level

Colonial Adminstrative and indirect Rule System in Nigeria historical Background

 The british who have often been credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria. The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. Each of the European power was given the opportunity to establish colonies where it had vested interest. The scramble for Africa,by these European powers led to the partitioning of Africa after the berlin conference of 1884-85. to achieve this , a number of measures were to be taken for example , removal of all visible opposition to the imposition of colonial rule, expaansion and consolidation of british authority over the territory later known as Nigeria