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PHARMACY

GST203: In about 3-Page review Chapter Two, "An Historical Analysis of the Evolution of the Nigerian State" in Salient Issues in Government and Nigeria's Politics, pages 15-32

The historical background of Nigeria government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. The Nigerian state is a colonial creation. It's 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 different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These among others include the Borno Empire, the Hausa States, and Sokoto caliphate in the North; the Igbo segmentary societies in the east; Benin Kingdom and the Oyo Empire in the west and several ethnic identities in the Venue Valley. These 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 this extreme northeastern corner, Lake Chad separates Nigeria from the country of Chad. Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from West to East and 650 miles from South to North, covering an area between 3 and 15 E longitude and between 4 and 14 N latitude.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archeological evidence from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that the man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Palaeolithic period 500,000- 9000BC. The artefacts,, mostly stone tools, found by archeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilisation. The Stone Age can be divided into several periods. These are: Early Stone age 3,000,000 BC, middle Stone age, 35,000- 15,000 and late stone Age 15000- 500BC.

The excavation of a stone Age Skeleton at 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.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EARLY MAN

The man who lived in Nigeria worked very hard because firstly he needed food so he needed to start inventing tools for hunting. These tools consisted of pebbles, these tools were cutting and chopping tools. Archaeologists called these tools Olduviatype tools because it was first identified in Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. This man started to advance from the stone age, they began to make axes that were used for different purposes. Another tool was invented, heavy chopper, this was more efficient in cutting than the last tools.

There is evidence that Nigeria became more advanced in the bronze and metal age. One of the active periods of technological efforts in Nigeria was during 500 B.C to 200 A.D. People living in Nigeria during this period were sculptors. They made heads and figurines, these figurines were found in the village of Nok.

MAJOR LANDMARK IN EARLY NIGERIAN HISTORY

Information on the landmark of Nigeria was made possible through excavation work done on places where man lived in Nigeria in the past,(Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife, Benin etc.). These were the centre of civilisation.

Nok civilisation: The discovery of terracotta had of a monkey by a tin miner in 1936i in Nok prompted more discoveries in order places. The area where these terracotta figurines are found is called Nok culture area. This culture is believed to be transitional civilisation between Stone Age and Iron Age in Nigeria because of the combination of stone and iron objects in that culture. Nok culture existed between the 5th and 2nd century B.C.

Benin Civilisation: Benin was important for it's art works. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and Ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass. Art Historians claimed bronze casting was created into Benin culture by Ife artist. They cast wooden doors and Ivory masks, the mask used as FESTAC symbol in 1977.

Ife Civilisation: They are important because of its terracotta and bronze heads. Art historians believed this culture originated from Nok culture because of their similarities . Objects like stools and figures were carved on quartz while animals and human figures are carved on granite. The heads were said to be human sized.

Igbo Ukwu Civilisation: Some bronze objects were accidentally discovered while digging toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to excavation of three sites in the area called Thurstan Shaw. These three sites include a burial chamber, a pit and compound wall. Many objects were found in these sites including decayed skeleton which was said to be a king and five slaves who were buried with him. The sites were dated to the Middle of the 9th century A.D.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL SYSTEM

In Yoruba Land: The Political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. They consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands. Each town had a king called "Oba" who resided in the palace called "Aafin". His paraphernalia of office included a beaded crown(Ade), a slippers (bata), horse tail(irukere) and scepter(Ase). The king also had other rulers of lesser status. They were in charge of the subordinate towns and wore crowns made of white beads called "Sese ofun." The Baale were in charge of the villages while the Oloja ruled over farmlands. The pattern of administration was hierarchical.

The government of the old Oyo empire is an example of the pre-colonial administration in Yoruba land. The first organ is the king known as Alaafin of Oyo. The alaafin was the head and contributed to its stability for centuries. He was regarded as the "lord of many lands". Sometimes he had an autocratic tendency but in practice, his powers were often limited and regulated by the Oyomesi. They had the power to remove any alaafin that transgressed the laws of the land. Apart from the alaafin cabinet, members of the Oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government. It was composed of free and prominent members of the society as well as members of the oyomesi. The army was another arm of government , its head was conferred with the coveted title of Are-ona-kankanfo. They performed functions such as stability of the empire, expansion, as well as keeping dissident territories in check. They were subject to the overlordship of the Alaafin

Igbo: They were best known for being acephalous in nature, because they had no centralised states in the ancient times, they operated without kings. They had 5 subcultures: Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, Igbo of Southern Eastern Nigeria, Igbo of Northern Eastern Nigeria, Western Igbo, Northern Igbo. Some Igbo scholars consider themselves as lost tribes of Hebrew. But according to Nri, the ancestors of Igbo, Eri, descended from the sky and sailed down the river of Anambra, when they arrived at Aguleri he met an autochthonous group and settled with them as the group increased the people migrated to other parts.

Political Structure of Igbo Land: The Igbo traditional society was not a centralized one but they had diffusion of authority into different groups. The family was the smallest unit of Igbo traditional society, each member was headed by an Ofo title holder. Households saw themselves belonging to one family but having the same father, this led to the extension of maximum families. The senior title holder was Okpara who held the Ozo title and presided over the council of elders. Age grade, this association grew from childhood and took a common name to celebrate an event associated with him the time of their birth. The community organised this for war, work and government, they collected fines from offenders, they guarded public safety. Oha-na-eze, all Male adults usually met in this assembly to perform legislative functions. Their meetings were held in open village squares. The decisions taken were absolute and final. Arochukwu, the secret society, they acted as intermediary between living and the ancestors, performed rituals, offered sacrifices to ward off evil and appease the gods and goddesses.

In Hausa land: Hausa land is located in northern Nigeria. It is made up of 14 states and 2 distinct groups. The first consist of 7 states called "Hausa banza" states and "Hausa bakwai" states. Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man called Bayajidda. Islam was not introduced to the region until the 11th century.

The "Sarki" was known as the head of any Hausa state. The Sarkin Kasa combined both political and religious functions. Between 14th and 15th century, the socio-political organization of Hausa states took another shape. Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the 14th century and by the 15th century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The whole of the former Hausa kingdom was divided into two confederations. The Sultan supervised the administration of the emirate system. The judicial administration of Hausa-fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called Sharia.

Colonial administration and indirect rule system in Nigeria: according to Hodgkin, "the second half of the century saw the arrival of the first Europeans in Benin, the Portuguese Ruy de sequeira in 1472 in Ewuare region." The Atlantic slave trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic ocean between the Europeans and Africans. After 3 years of slave trade, came the period of legitimate commerce. In 1861, they took Lagos as a colony. The scramble for Africa, by these Europeans power led to the partitioning of Africa after the Berlin conference of 1884-1885.

The May 1906 amalgamation is the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January, 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria. Sir, Frederick Lugard is known as the father of the January 1914 amalgamation.

