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**ASSIGNMENT**

**In about 3 pages review chapter 2 ‘an historical analysis of the evolution of the Nigerian state’ in salient issues in government and Nigeria’s politics, pages 15-32**

**Early man in Nigeria**

the exact time man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which appointed to the fact that man had settled in a region known as Nigeria since Palaeolithic period 500,000- 9000 BC the artefacts, mostly stone tools, found by archaeologist further confirmed that Nigerians took part in the stone age civilisation.

The man who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment. First, he needed food, for this purpose, he began to hunt the animals and to gather fruits. But he soon began to invent tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools.

**The Scientific and Technological Development of Early Nigerian Societies**

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

**Historical Background of pre-colonial Political System in Yoruba Land**

The Yoruba’s are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria and are united by language. The Yoruba people trace their origin to Oduduwa who was the founder the Yoruba kingdom. Ile-Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people.

**The Oke Oramfe’s Version of the Origin of Yoruba**

Oke Oramfe is located in Ile-Ife. It is believed to be the centre from which the world was created. According to the legend, there was a period when the world was covered by water. The almighty god then decided to send some of his messengers to the world and they include Obatala or Orisa Nla or Orisa Alase (as the leader) and sixteen Oye (immortals). They were given five pieces of iron, a lump of earth tied to a white piece of cloth and a cockerel. Somewhere on their way to the world, their leader, Obatala, got drunk and Oduduwa seized the symbol of authority from him and eventually led the party to the world.

**Political Structure of the Pre-colonial Yoruba Land**

The political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms are similar in nature. Each consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands. Each town has a king known as ‘Oba who resides in the place called Aafin. His paraphernalia of the office included a beaded crown (Ade), a slippers (Bata), horse tail (irukere) and sceptre (Ase).

The Oyo Empire is a typical example of the pre-colonial administration in Yoruba land. The first organ was the **Alaafin of Oyo.** The Alaafin was the head of the empire and was resident in the capital. The second organ was the **Ogboni Cult’s Administration.** Apart from theAlaafin’s cabinet, members of the Oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government. It played a mediatory role in any conflict between the Oyomesi and the Alaafin. The third organ of government was **the army.** Its head was conferred with the coveted title of **Are-Ona-Kankanfo and** it was made up of infantry and Calvary.

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

The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. Professor M.A Onwuejeogwu (2000) regards the Nri versions as the only authentic version of the origin in existence in the oral tradition of Igbo. According to the Nri, the ancestor of Igbo, Eri, descended from the sky and sailed down the River Anambara. When he arrived at Aguleri, he met some autochthonous group of people who had no living memory of their own and settled with them. As their population increased, some group migrated to other parts of Igbo land to establish their own settlements.

**Political Structure of the Pre-Colonial Igbo Land**

In the traditional Igbo society, there was no highly centralised authority but instead they had what could be called a diffusion of authority into different groups. In other words, they practiced a decentralise system of government.

The family was the smallest political unit in Igbo traditional society. Each family was headed by an ‘Ofo’ title holder. Among the ‘Ofo’ title holders, one of them was recognised as the most senior to others. He was known as the ‘Okpara’. Age grade was organised on a village basis. The association or age grade grew from childhood and took a common name to commemorate an event associated with the time of their birth. Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in Igbo society. All the male adults’ members usually met in this assembly to perform legislative functions. The secret societies consisted of the diviners’ masquerades who acted as intermediary between the living and the ancestors.

**Historical Background of Pre-colonial 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 group consist of seven states called Hausa Bakwai states that is, Hausa legitimate states. The second group consist of the remaining seven states and were known as ‘Hausa banza’ states that is, Hausa illegitimate states. The Hausa Bakwai states are Daura, Biram, Zaria, Kastina, Kano, Rano, and Gobir while the Hausa Banza states were Nupe, Gwari ,Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi.

Oral tradition attributed to the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda, an Arab prince who travelled to 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, she produced another son with Bayajidda and each of the sons ruled one of the seven Hausa city-states, becoming the first kings.

**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-organised court. Sarkin Kasar, which means ‘ruler of the land’ was the full title 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 fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the region of the ruling class. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. The jihad led to the conquest of the existing old Hausa kingdom. There was an introduction of a new system of selecting and appointing rulers described as Emirs to ruler the caliphate. Each of the emirs owed allegiance to Dan Fodio and his two representatives at Sokoto and Gwandu. The Emir was an absolute monarch in his emirate.

**Colonial Administration and Administration and Indirect Rule System in Nigeria- Historical Background**

The Britishwho have often been credited with the creation of the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to land in Nigeria through Bini kingdom. Slave trade became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of Portuguese.

After three centuries of shameful slave trade, came the so-called period of legitimate commerce. This was the opportunity for Europeans to get more involved in the affairs of the African states. The scramble for Africa, by these European powers led to the portioning Africa after Berlin Conference of 1884-85. Britain colonised Nigeria, Ghana, the Gambia and Sierra-Leone in West Africa. As from 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 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 May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British Nigeria. British government amalgamated Lagos colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria to form the new colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and southern Nigeria. Sir Frederick Lugard (later became lord) is best known as the father of the ‘January 1914’ amalgamation. Britain, therefore, governed Nigeria by means of system popularly referred to as ‘indirect Rule’. Indirect rule may be defined as a system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional ruler.