

RUFUS FORTUNE CHINAEZE
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GST 203
MBBS

Assignment

Write a 3-page summary of Chapter 2

Historical Analysis of the Evolution of Nigerian State

Nigeria's background history as regards government and politics can be traced back to the pre-colonial (before the arrival of colonial masters) and colonial period (when the colonial administration was established in the country).

The specific time that man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but archaeological evidences such as stone tools reveal that Nigerians were part of the stone age. The early Nigerian man had to figure out ways to cope with his environment. When he needed food, he started hunting and farming so he had to develop tools to do so.

The numerous trademarks and eras that signified the scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies. They include:

- Nok Civilisation: A terracotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey made by tin miners was discovered on Nok ^{in 1936}. This Nok culture is believed to be a transition between stone and iron age.
- Benin civilisation: Known for a lot of artwork, the Benin people carved objects with wood, ivory, bronze and brass.
- Ife Civilisation: Ife was known for its terracotta and bronze heads. Different objects and figurines are carved on quartz and granite. Most of their artworks was life-sized.
- Igbo-Ukwu Civilisation: While digging a toilet pit at Igbo-Ukwu in 1939, some bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered. The three sites ^{excavated} included a burial chamber, a pit and a compound wall.

There were traditional political institutions established then. All have different structures based on the complexity of the ethnic group.

The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic groups in

Nigeria. It is said that they can be traced back to Oduduwa who is seen as the father of Yorubas and their ancestral home is Ile-Ife. Yoruba kingdoms constituted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands. Each town is headed by a King, the Oba. He is the spiritual and political head of the kingdom. Institutions known as "ewo" were designed to checkmate the ~~King~~ Oba's excesses. After the King, the second in command was the "sese ofun", followed the Baales (in charge of villages) and then the Oloja (in charge of farmlands). The compounds were headed by the most senior male member of the family.

The government of Oyo Empire is a good example of pre-colonial administration in Yorubaland.

The first organ of government was the King, Alafin of Oyo who is the fountain of authority. The second arm of government is the oyomesi cult and the Army is the third arm of government.

The Igbo people are known for their acephalous way of life because from ancient times they had no centre states. Igbos are grouped into 5 sub-cultures: Igbos of eastern Nigeria, Igbos of south-eastern Nigeria, Igbos of north-eastern Nigeria, western Igbos and northern Igbos.

There are different stories as regards the origin and migration. Some believe Igbos are off-shoots of the lost tribes of Hebrews while others such as Prof. M.A. Onwuejeogwu believes in the Nri version. According to It, Eni, the ancestor of Igbo, descended from the sky and met a group of people who were formed a society. Political institutions amongst the Igbos included: the family (smallest political unit), age grades, Oha-na-eze (a form of general assembly) and secret societies (diviners and masquerades).

The Hausa people make up for the largest ethnic group in Nigeria and are located in the North. Before 1804, Hausa land composed fourteen states ~~groups~~ divided into two groups known as "Hausa Bakwai" and "Hausa Banza". Their origin can be traced to Bayajidda, an Arab prince who migrated to Baghdad. "Sarki" is the head of any typical Hausa state. The Sarkin Kasa who is also the head of state performs both religious and political functions. After the Jihad, emirate system of government was introduced. Sarki's were replaced by Emirs. The Emir was the political, administrative and spiritual leader. The judicial administration of Hausa-Fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called Shari'a.