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QUESTION
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.
ANSWERS
CHAPTER 2
AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE
Introduction
The pre-colonial period is the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria. Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. The country is bordered to the south by the Bights of Benin and Biafra which are on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. In its 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.
Early man in Nigeria
Man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 5000-9000BC. The artifacts, mostly stone tools, found by archaeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilization. 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 Achievements of Early man
The man who lived in Nigeria started to invent tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools. Archaeologists called the tools the Oldowan-type tools. This is because this type of tool was first identified by the archaeologists in the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania. These tools were made during the early stone age, but they were later refined during the middle stone age and late stone age. Small stone tools believed to be used for hunting have been located in Jos, Plateau state and in Iwo Eleru in Ondo state. Forms of ground axes and smaller stone tools, iron axes and tools, were also found on the sites.
The scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies
Nok culture/ civilization: The area where these terracotta figurines were found is called the Nok culture or civilization area. The Nok culture is believed to be transitional civilization between the Stone Age and the Iron Age in Nigeria because of the presence of combination of stone and iron objects.
Ife civilization: Ife is important because of its terracotta and bronze heads. Objects such as tools and figures were carved on hard stone called quartz while animal and human figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails. They also believed that it was from Ife that Benin probably learnt bronze sculpture.
Traditional Political Institutions in Pre-colonial Nigeria
In this section there are three ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani.
Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Yoruba land: The Yoruba’s are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. 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. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader that led the Yoruba to Ile-Ife and subsequently sent his sons and grandsons to found other Yoruba Kingdoms.

The Oyo Empire: The first organ of government in Oyo Empire was the king known as Alaafin of Oyo.

The Alaafin Administration: The Alaafin was the head of the empire, and was resident in the capital. He was also regarded as “Lord of many lands”. The Alaafin was the fountain of authority and was therefore regarded as the “companion of gods”. The Oyomesi also had the power to remove any Alaafin especially when he appeared dictatorial or transgressed the laws of the land.

Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Igbo land: The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. The Igbo are grouped into five sub-cultures: the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of South-eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of North-eastern Nigeria, the western Igbo and the Northern Igbo.

Political structure of the pre-colonial Igbo land: There was no highly centralized 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. Each family was headed by an “Ofo” title holder. In the ancient times, the Oha-na-eze’s meetings were held in the open village square. The elders formed the core of village administration. There are highly respected accordingly. The official religion practiced in pre-colonial Igbo land was the traditional religion. The Igbo believe in re-incarnation.

Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Hausa Land: Hausa land is located in Northern Nigeria. The Hausa “bakwai” states are Daura, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Kano, Rano, and Gobir while the Hausa “Banza” states are Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi.

Political structure of the pre-colonial Hausa land: The “sarki” was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. Sarkin Kasar, which means “ruler of the land”, was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of Hausa state. It is worthy of note that between 14th and 15th centuries, the socio-political organization of Hausa states took another shape. For instance, Islam was adopted and this gave birth too many new political institutions such as the offices of the Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Dogari, Yari Sarki and Sarki Yau.

Colonial Administration and indirect rule system in Nigeria Historical Background

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive Nigeria through Bini Kingdom. The Atlantic slave trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic Ocean between the Europeans and Africans. It became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of the Portuguese. The trade got to maturity in the 16th century. They did so through the operations of the British west African Naval squadron. In 1861, they took Lagos as a colony. But, the bulk of Nigerian territory was occupied in the late 19th century. The scramble for Africa, by these European powers led to the partitioning of Africa after the Berlin conference of 1884-85. As from 1898, the British government sought to establish and maintain a colonial state in Nigeria. To achieve this, a number of measures were to be taken, for example, removal of all visible opposition to the imposition of colonial rule, expansion and consolidation of British authority over the territory later known as Nigeria.

The Birth of Nigeria as a Geo-political Entity

The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British government amalgamated Lagos colony and protectorate with the 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. The principal reason for this is the same as that of May 1906. The Northern protectorate was not as economically buoyant as the colony and protectorate of southern Nigeria. That was why, for the British imperial offices, since the southern trade was booming, amalgamation would allow the surpluses acquired in the south. Sir Frederick Lugard is best known as the father of the “January 1914” amalgamation. Britain, therefore governed Nigeria by, means of a system popularly referred to as “Indirect Rule”. Indirect rule may be is a system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional rulers. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.