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ASSIGNMENT

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.

Answer

INTRODUCTION

Historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. 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 state is a colonial creation and 700miles stretches roughly from west to east and 650 miles from south to north covering an area between 3 ͦ and 15 ͦE longitudes and between 4 ͦ and 14 ͦN latitude.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA

The particular time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man has settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the palaeolithic period 500,000-9000bc. The Stone Age can be divided into several periods. Which are: early Stone Age 3,000,000-35,000BC; while middle Stone Age, 35,000-15,000BC and late Stone Age 15,000-500BC. Skeleton was dated for 12,000 years ago and the country has been inhabited.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EARLY MAN

Years back men who lived in Nigeria worked hard to cope with his environment. The tools the oldowan-type tools was called archeaologists and this type of tools was first identified by the archeaolgists in the olduvai gorge in tanazia. When early men proceeded to invent another type of tool, which is called heavy chopper it was efficient in cutting than existing tools. They varied greatly in size, from small-sized objects of only two and a half centimetres to huge objects. The scientific and technological development of early Nigerian societies includes; major landmark in early Nigerian history, nok culture or civilization, benin civilization, ife civilization, igbo ukwu civilization and traditional political institutionsin pre-colonial Nigeria.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM IN NIGERIA LAND

The largest ethnic group in Nigeria are the yorubas and are united by language. The founder of Yoruba kingdom is odduduwa. Ile-ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people.

THE OKE ORAMFE’S VERSION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE YORUBA

If oke oramfe was believed to be the centre from which the world as created and located in ile-ife. Oduduwa who became the ruler has extended his authorities to other Yoruba towns and villages.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRE-COLONIAL YORUBA LAND

Yoruba kingdoms due to political structures were similar in nature. Each town as a king known as “ oba”. He is the supreme authority in the kingdom and his words are laws and biding on everybody. 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”. Another group of rulers are baale and oloja. The pattern of administration and body in various Yoruba towns were called different names such as oyomesi, ewarefa, e.t.c

THE OYO EMPIRE

Alaafin of oyo known as the king of Oyo Empire in the first organ of government is a typical example of the pre-colonial administration in Yoruba land.

I.The alaafin administrative: oyo was one of the rare empires that had in-built checks and balance in a very unique and expectional way in its system of government. He was also regarded as “lord of many lands”.

ii.The ogboni cult’s administration: members of the oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government apart from the alaafin cabinet. The ogboni cult had a very vital position in Yoruba society.

iii.The army: The army was another arm of government in traditional Yoruba society and very organized. It was made up of infantry and cavalry. The army was credited with performing important functions which included stability of the empire, expansion, as well as keeping dissident territories in check.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM IN IGBO LAND

The igbo are very known for their segmentary way of life. They are groups into five sub-culture which are; the igbo of eastern Nigeria, the igbo of south-eastern Nigeria, the igbo of north-eastern Nigeria, the western igbo and northern igbo. Assumption is based on the so-called similarities between the cultures of the igbo and the ancient Hebrew and the igbo society has always been known as acephalous. Some groups migrated to other parts of igboland to establish their own settlements.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRE-COLONIAL IGBO LAND

There was no highly centralized authority in igbo tradition. Some socio-political institutions existed in each village to perform legislative, executive, administrative, military and judicial functions; such institution included the family, council of elders, age grades and secret societies. The igbo believe in re-incarnation. Offence among the igbo was profaning of deities. The religious lives of the igbos was surrounded by mysticisms and superstitions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM IN HAUSA LAND

In 1804, was made up of fourteen states and they were of two distinct groups which are HAUSA BAKWAI and HAUSA BANZA. Hausa land is located in northern Nigeria. The Hausa states may have been founded by Berber immigrants from north of the Sahara, or else by peoples coming from east Africa. Islam was not introduced to the region on any discernible scale until the eleventh century.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE PRE-COLONIAL HAUSA LAND

The head of any typical Hausa state was known as “Sarki”. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organized court. Sarkin kasar which mean “ruler of the land” was a title given to the effective head of Hausa state.

THE BIRTH OF NIGERIA AS A GEO-POLITICAL ENTITY

All the different part of Nigeria conquered by the British was still under their original administration before the year 1900. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel.

REFERENCES

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