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The historical background involves the pre colonial era and colonial era. The Nigeria state is a product of colonialism. Nigeria comprises of different chiefdoms, Borno empire, the Hausa state and Sokoto Caliphate of North, Igbo sedimentary societies in the East, Benin kingdom and Ouo empire in the West and several identities in the Benue Valley.

Early Man in Nigeria: There is no exact time to say man lived in Nigeria, but there are archaeological evidence that man settled in Nigeria since Paleolithic period 500,00-9000 B.C. The artefacts found by archaeologists confirmed Nigerians took part in stone age. The excavation of Stone skeleton at Iwo Eleru near Akure in Ondo dated 12,000 years ago has thrown light on the occupation of Nigeria.

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. This tools consisted of pebbles, these tools were cutting and chopping tools. Archaeologists called these tools Olduviatype tools because it was first identified in Olduvia Gorge in Tanazia. This man started to advance from 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

Knowledge 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 5th and 2and century B.C.

Benin Civilisation: 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 decymayed 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

Yoruba: The Yoruba is one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Yorubas trace their origin to Oduduwa, who they believed was the first leader that led Yorubas to Ile-Ife their ancestral home and subsequently sent his sons and grandsons to find more Yoruba kingdoms. According to legend there was a period were the world was covered with water. God decided to end down some of his messengers to the world which included Obatala and Orisa Nla, as their leader,and sixteen immortal. They were given five pieces of iron, a lump of earth tied to a white cloth, and a cockerel. Somewhere in the world Obatala got drunk. Oduduwa seized the symbol of authority and led the party to the world. He served down the five pieces of iron and put the lump of earth on them. The cockerel them spread the lump of earth with its feet throughout the earth. Rhe earth was formed and Oduduwa became the ruler.

Political Structure of Yoruba Land: The pattern of administration was hierarchical. The Oba was the spiritual and political head, he enjoyed privileges but to certain limitations. There were lesser ranks; Baales, the third rank, were in charge of the villages; Oloja, the fourth rank, were won charge of farmlands. The Oyo empires was clearly a pre colonial administration. It was unique in its system of governance. **The Alaafin** was the head of the empire, he was assisted by officials (priests,officials,and eunuchs). Sometimes he had autocratic tendency but it was limited and he was watched by Oyomesi, this consisted of seven members headed by the Bashorun. Their power was to remove Alaafin when they were becoming dictatorial. **The Ogboni** cult, this was a very powerful cult, they played mediatory role I any conflict between Alaafinand Oyomesi. They checked the Oyomesi too. **The Army, Aare-ona-kankanfo,** lived outside the capital, they contributed to the the expansion and stability of the empire.

Igbo: They were best known for being acephalousin nature, because they had no centralised states in the ancient times, the operated without kings. They had 5 subcultures: Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, Igbo of Southern Eastern Nigeria, Ogbo 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 peppel 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 until of Igbo traditional society each member was headed by an **Ofo title holder**. Household 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 **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 sacrificestk ward off evil and appease the gods and goddesses.

Hausa: Hausa land before 1804 was made up of fourteen states, divided in feo distinct groups. Oral traditions attributed the origin of Hausa states to a man called Bayajidda, who travelled form Sahel to Baghdad. He killed a monstrous snake troubling the people and married the queen, the woman had six sons already then produced another with Bayajiddaeach son ruled kne of the seven haudea states making them.the first kings.

Political structure of the Hausa Land: Sarki , headed Hausa states, worked with officials in a court. Kasar "ruler of the land". Sarkin Kasar combined controlled political and religious functions.

Emirates system of government: Islam was introduced in the 14th century . The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio strengthened the religion in that area. The Jihad led the conquest of the old Hausa kingdom, this introduced centralised system of government. The Emir controlled the economic activities within his Emirates,. The Emir was an absolute monarch. But he was assisted bygroip of village heads. They included; sarkin fada was spokesman of the emit; Wazir was prime minister of Emirates; Galadima means administratorbof capital city; Madawaki means head of emirate army; Magaji means government treasuer; Sarkim dan doka means inspector general of police force; Sarkin ruwa means minister in charge of water resources; Sarkin Puwa means head chairman of butchers; Yari meanschiep superintendent of prison. The judicial administration in Hausa was based on Islamic legal system called Shatia. The chief justice of Sharia court is Grand Khadi.

Colonial Administration and Indirect Rule in Nigeria: The British were not the first to land in Nigeria, it was the Portuguese. The Atlantic slave trade became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of Portuguese. By 1460, over 700 slaves were exported annually to Portugal, sources of slaves included condemned prisoners, political prisoners, victims of kidnapping and relatives sold to pay debts. It was the Trans Atlantic slave trade that put British in contact with Nigeria. The Europeans abolished the trans Atlantic slave trade. The Europeans used this as an opportunity to control the lives of Africans.