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CHAPTER 2

The pre-colonial period is the period before the coming of the colonials to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria. Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These among others, include the borno empire, the Hausa states, and the Sokoto caliphate in the north; the Igbo segmentary societies in the east; Benin kingdom and the oyo empire in the west and several ethnic identities in the Benue valley. 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. On the west. Nigeria from the country of chad Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from west to east and 650 miles from south to north, covering an area between 3 to 15 degrees E longitude and between 4 to 14 degrees N latitude.

The exact time when man begins to live in Nigeria is unknown but are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now known in Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9000BC, the stone age can be divided into several periods, these are early stone age 3,000,000,35,000BC; Middle stone age,35000,30000 BC,late stone age 15000-500BC.The skeleton was dated some 12,000 years ago, began to invent tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools,achealogists called the tools the Oldowan type tools. This is because the type of tool was first identified by the archaeologist in the olduvai large in Tanzania. Similar tools had been located earlier by archeologists who worked outside Nigeria at a site in Stmichel in Nothern Nigeria.

Small stone tools believed to be used for hunting have been located in Jos,Plateau and iwo eleru in Ondo state. It was more efficient in cutting than existing tools. There is evidence of more advanced technology in various parts of Nigeria during the bronze and metal age. Around 500BC to 200AD people who lived in Nigeria who made sculptures. Many were of human heads and figures. They varied greatly in size, from small sized objects, the site in which the figures were made of terracotta and they aii possessed a distinctive artistic style, forms of ground stone axes and smaller stone tools, iron axes and tools, were also found on the sites, Similar findings have been made in parts of ile ife,jebba,esie,igbo ukwu and Benin.

Landmark in early Nigerian history; Information on the major land marks in early Nigerian history was made possible through the excavation work done on the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote area. Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. They are usually referred to as centers of ancient civilization.

Nok culture was also a discovery of a terracotta burnt clay head of monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places. Terracotta and bronze heads. Objects such as stools and figures were carved on hard stone called quartz while animal and humans were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails. Most of the bronze and terra cotta heads were said to be life size decorated with facial marks and natural hair. Art historians believe that Ife art originated from the Nok culture because of similarities in the two, especially beaded neck, wrist and ankles. They also believed that it was from Ife that Benin probably learnt bronze sculpture's bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to the excavation of three sites included a burial chamber, a pit and compound wall. Many objects made of bronze were discovered in the various sites including the remains of remains of decayed skeleton which have suggested to be those of a king and five slaves who were buried with him. The sites excavated at Igbo Ukwu have been dated to the middle of the 9th century AD.

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. The political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature which are considered of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and karmlands. The oba is both the spiritual and political head of the kingdom and his words are laws and bidding on everybody. The oba enjoyed many privileges but certain limitations were placed on his powers.

The Oyo Empire; The first organ of government in Oyo empire was the king known as Alaafin of Oyo. They are; The Alaafin administration, Ogboni cults administration, The army.

Historical Background of pre-colonial political system in Igbo land

The Igbo of eastern Nigeria

The Igbo of south eastern Nigeria

The Igbo of North eastern Nigeria

The Western Igbo

The northern Igbo

Political structure of the pre-colonial Igbo land

In the Igbo traditional society, there was no highly centralized authority but but instead they had what could be called a different groups. In other words,they practiced direct democracy.

The family was the smallest political unit in Igbo traditional society. Each family was headed by an 'ofo'title holder. The family sees itself as having one common ancestor. This principal is also present in the minimal lineage.

Age grade was organized 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. The age grades were strongly organized among the northern and southern Igbo peoples. Hausa land is located in Northern Nigeria. Hausa land before 1804 was made up of fourteen states and they were two distinct groups.

Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda,an Arab prince who travelled Sahel from baghad.

Political structure of the pre-colonial Hausa land ;sarki was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. he worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organized court. Arkin kasar which means ruler of the land, was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of head of Hausa state. The sarkin kasar combined both political and religious\spiritual functions.

Islam was also introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The jihad led to the conquest of the existing old Hausa kingdom.

The emir's cabinet include;

1. Sarkin fada-the spokesman of the emir and organizer of palace workers;
2. Waziri- the prime minister of the emirate;
3. Madawaki"-the commander and head of the Emirate army
4. Magaji;government treasurer in charge of the government treasury;
5. Sarkin dan Doka; inspector general of police force called dan dorka
6. Sarkin ruwa;minister in charge of water resources or the river fishing official;
7. Sarkin pawa;head of chairman of buthcers at the abattoirs
8. Yari;chief superintendent of prisons in the emirate

The government amalgamated Northern and southern. 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.