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CHAPTER TWO (AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE.)

Nigeria's historical background can be based on pre-colonial period which is a time based on existence of Nigeria before the colonialists. Nigeria's history is also based on colonial period which has to do with the coming of the colonialists. Man has lived in the world for quite a long time but no exist date can be given about the existence of man but however, the archaeological evidences from different parts of the country show that man had settled in the region known as Pala eolithic period from 500, 000 – 9000BC. The Pala eolithic period is also known as the stone era which is divided into three stages which includes: Early stone age(3,000,000- 35,000BC), Middle stone age(35,000 – 15,000BC) and Late stone age(15,000 – 500BC). As time passed by, the early men were able to gradually develop and produce different things which helped them to become more productive in life.

The scientific and technological development of Nigerians can be traced back to the different places where the early men lived which include Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin which will be discussed briefly.

1. Nok culture/ civilization: The discovery of terracotta, head of a monkey was discovered by tin miners in Nok in 1936 and was in existence in Wamba, Kastina- Ala and Jema. It is believed to be a transitional civilization between Stone Age and iron objects. It was in existence from the 5th to 2nd century BC.

2. Benin civilization: Benin is popularly known for its craftsmanship which is made with the use of wood and ivory, brass, and bronze. It was introduced by an Ife artist who made the FESTAC Symbol with ivory in 1977.

3. Igbo Ukwu civilization: The Igbo Ukwu art was discovered while digging a toilet pit in 1939 which led to the excavation of three sites which are burial chamber, a pit and a compound wall by Thurstan Shaw. Examples of objects found include skeletons of a king and five slaves. It can be traced back to the 9th century A.D.

4. Ife civilization: Ife has terracotta and bronze head which are in the form of stools and figures which are carved on hard stone called quartz while animal and human figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails. It is believed that Nok and Ife have similarities because they both have beaded neck, wrist, and ankles. It is also believed that Benin learnt its artwork from Ife through bronze sculpture.

The three majority groups in Nigeria consists of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa – Fulani which be discussed below:

THE YORUBA.

The Yoruba are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria. The Yoruba people trace their origin to Oduduwa and Ile- Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba. According to Oke Oramfe, the world was covered with water and the almighty God sent some messengers to the world with pieces of iron, a lump of earth tied to a white cloth, and a cockerel which was led by Oduduwa because Obatala got drunk. Oduduwa set down the five pieces of iron

and placed the lump of earth on them and the cockerel then spread the lump of earth with its feet throughout the earth.

The political structure of the Yoruba consists of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages, and farmlands which is been controlled by the Oba, Baales and Oloja, his chiefs.

The Oyo Empire consists of the Alaafin administration, which was the head of the empire, resident in the capital which was also regarded as “Lord of many lands”. The Alaafin was enormously powerful but was limited and regulated by the Oyomesi, a council of seven members headed by Basho run who acted as the prime minister. The Oyomesi had the power to choose the next successor after the demise of Alaafin and power to remove any Alaafin who acts dictatorial. The Oyo Empire consists of the Ogboni Cult’s Administration which was composed of free and prominent members of the society as well as the members of the Oyomesi. It also acted as a mediator between conflicts happening among the Alaafin and Oyomesi. The army is part of the Oyo Empire and the head of the army was conferred with the title of Are –Ona – Kankanfo which was made of infantry and cavalry. The provincial governments enjoyed considerable autonomy.

IGBO.

The Igbo’s had no centralized states and were known as acephalous or segementary. They have five subgroups known as the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of South – Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of North – Eastern Nigeria, the Western Igbo, and the Northern Igbo. The Igbo believes that they have a connection with the Israelites because there some similarities between. According to Professor M.A Onwuejeogwu, the origin of the Igbo people can be traced back to the Nri version which says that Eri was the ancestor of the Igbo descended from the sky and sailed down the River Anambra and arrived at Aguleri where he meet some autochthonous group of people who had no living memory of their own. As the population increased, some groups migrated to other parts of Igbo land.

The Igbo did not have a centralized system of government so it was hard to have a political structure but however had political units which include the family which is the smallest unit in the society and was headed by an “Ofo” title holder. The family believe that they have a common ancestor and they come together to decide on different decisions. The “Ozo” title was held by the most senior family member known as the “Okpara”. The age grade was next after the family. The age grade grew from childhood and took a common name to mark the event that took place during their birth.

HAUSA.

Hausa land is in the Northern Nigeria. Before 1804, Hausa land was made up of fourteen states which was divided two which include “Hausa Bakwai” and “Hausa banza”. The Hausa origin can be traced to a man named Bayajidaa, an Arab prince who travelled to the Sahel from Baghdad who killed a snake at Daura and married the queen. The queen and Bayajidaa had one son together and the queen had six sons who ruled the Hausa kingdom. This was how the Hausa spread across the kingdom. In the political structure of the Hausa, the head was known as the” Sarki” who worked with a retinue of officials in a court. “Sarkin Kasar” was the title given to an effective head of state who was also the chief executive of state. Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century and by the fifteenth century was passed as the religion of the ruling class. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. The Hausa kingdom had two divisions

which are: Sokoto and Gwandu. The council consisted of Sarkin fada who was the spokesman of the Emir and organizer of palace workers. Waziri, the prime minister of the emirate. Galadima, the administrator of the capital city. Madawaki, commander and Head of the Emirate. Magaji, government treasurer. Sarkin Dan Doka, inspector General of Police. Sarkin ruwa, minister in charge of water resources. Sarkin pawa, head of chairman of butchers. Yari, chief superintendent.

People are of the belief that Nigeria was discovered by the British, however it was discovered by the Portuguese who were the first Europeans to arrive in Nigeria through Bini kingdom. The Atlantic slave trade was the trade between the Europeans and Africans. In 1441, a Portuguese voyager, Gonzalves presented 10 African slaves to Prince Henry the Navigator as gifts. By 1460, about 700 to 800 slaves were exported annually to Portugal from West Africa for slavery, as political prisoners, condemned criminals etc. The Trans – Atlantic slave trade was the unfortunate channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria. After three centuries of shameful slave trade, came the so-called period of legitimate commerce. The struggle among the European powers for the colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century and the Europeans were given the power to establish colonies where it had invested.

In the year 1900, different parts of Nigeria conquered by the British were still under their original administration and responsibility of the British Colonial office. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the first in Nigeria. Tamuno (1980), observed that the aim of the amalgamation of the 1906 was purely economic. The second amalgamation took place in 1914 and the Northern and Southern Nigeria was amalgamated by the British. The primary aim was also purely economically. Sir Fredrick Lugard is known as the father of the “January 1914” amalgamation. Britain governed Nigeria through “indirect rule”. Indirect rule is a system the British used to rule her colonies through traditional rulers. They gave the rulers instructions and the rulers passed them on to the people, this was so that the British could rule behind the scenes without the people's knowledge.