NAME: JACK TRACY TAMUNOETELA IBINABO

MATRIC NUMBER: 19/SCI03/006

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ASSIGNMENT: Summarise chapter 2 in your textbook

The background of politics can be traced to the pre-colonial per colonial period and the colonial period. The pre-colonial period was the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that the colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria. Nigeria is a colonial creation. It can be referred to as the historical arrangement that arose out of the European adventure with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. Before the emergence of Nigerian state, pre-colonial Nigeria compares of different independent chiefdoms, states kingdoms and empires, which includes Borono Empires, the Hausa states and the Sokoto Caliphate in the North the igbo sementary societies in the east the Benin kingdom etc . The particular time man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidences from different parts of the Nigeria which pointed out the fact the men had started to live in Nigeria since the Paleolithic 500,000-9000BC. The excavation of a stone age skeleton at Iwo Eleru near Akure in Ondo state has thrown more light on the earliest occupation in Nigeria.

The men who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with the environment, they had to hunt for animals and search for fruit and they began to make tools for farming and cutting. The Archaeologist called those tools Oldowan- type tools. The major land marks in the Nigerian history was made possible through the evocation work done on places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past. Some of the places where those men lived in Nigeria was called: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin etc’

The discovery of a terracotta ( burnt clay ) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in more places such as Wamba, Katsina,-Ala and Jema. Thw area where those terracotta figurines were found is called the Nok culture or civilization area.

Benin was known for its art-work. The craft men of benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass. Art historians claimed that the Ife artist were the ones who introduced the Bronze casting to Benin.

The Ife people were of importance in the area of its terracotta and bronze heads. Some objects like stools and figures were caved on hard stone called quartz while animals and human figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails.

For the Igbo Ukwu civilization the Bronze objects were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1939. This eventually led to the excavation of three sites in tge area by an archaeologist called Thurstan Sha.

The background of the pre-colonial political system in Yoruba

The Yoruba’s are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria and they are united in one language, they trace their origin to Oduduwa who was the founder of the Yoruba kingdom they have different versions of the origin. In the book History of Yoruba 1950, Johnson traced the origin of the Yoruba people to the east according to him the Yoroba people came from the Nort eastern part if Africa. It was from Egypt after several years the of journey that the Yoruba people settled in Ile-Ife in Nigeria.

In the Yoruba pre-colonial political structure each consisted of a capital town subordinate towns village and farm lands. Each town has a King known as ‘Oba’ who resides in a place called Alafin. He is both the spiritual and political head of the kingdom. The king also had other rulers with lesser rank.

In the Aladfin administration, the Oyo empire was very unique and exceptional in the system of government. It was one of the rear empires that in built checks and balances. The Alaafin was the head of the empire and was resident in the capital he was regarded as the lord of the light. In the Ogboni cult administration members of Oyomesi cult constituted another arm of government. It was composed of free and prominent members of the society as well as members of the Oyomesi. The Army was another arm of government in the traditional Yoroba society. The army performed important functions which are stability of the empire, expansion as well as keeping dissident territories in check.

The Igbos are best known for their seminary way of life, they had no centralized state. The Igbos are grouped into 5 sub culture. The Igbo of eastern Nigeria, The Igbo of south Eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of North Eastern Nigeria, the western Igbo, the Northern Igbo. One of the most popular vision of the Igbo is the one that points to Israel. The assumption is based on the so-called similarities between the culture of the Igbo and the ancient Hebrew. The Igbo people practiced a decentralized system of government because there was no traditional ruler. Although there was no centralized system of government, they were socio political institutions set up or the role of the executive, legislative, administrative, military and judicial functions. The family was the smallest political unit in the Igbo traditional society. Each family was headed by an Ofo title holder. Among the Ofo title holders one of them was recognized as the most senior to others he was known as the Okpara who held the Ozo title and presided over the council of elders meeting where issues affecting the lives of the people were discussed.

The age grades were organized on the village basis. The age grades were strongly organized among the southern and northern Igbo peoples. The communities organized them self’s for work, war and government0. Those who were still youths enforced the elders’ decisions they served as police and fought in battle field.

Oha-na eze are the male adult in the society, they usually met at the open village square to discussed or perform the legislative functions. All decisions made are absolute and final. The secret societies consisted of the diviners’ masquerades, ‘ubinuknabi’ at Arochukwu the Amadisha of Ozuzzu and so on.

The historical background of pre-colonial system in Hausa land. Hausa land is located in northern Nigeria. Hausa land before 1804 was made up of 14 states and they were two distant groups. Which are Hausa Bakwai and Hausa Banza. They relate the origin of the state to a man named Bayajidda an Arab prince who traveled to He shal from Baghdad. He killed a monstrous snake that oppressed the people of Daura and he married the queen. The Queen had 6 sones already and she produced another son with Bayajidda, and each of the sons ruled one of the seven Hausa city-states becoming the first kings.

In the political structure of the pre-colonial Hausa land the Sarki was known as the head of any typical Hausa State. Sarki Kasar which means ruler of land was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of Hausa state. The Sarki Kasar combined both political and religious / spiritual functions he was also the chief executive and the judge of the state, but he was aided by a council of state. It is worthy to note that between the 14 and 15th centuries the socio political organization of the Hausa state took another shape. For instance, Islam was adopted and it gave birth to many political institutions. There was jhad after the introduction of Islam and this led to the conquest of the existing old Hausa kingdom the overthrow of the political leadership by the Fulani and the establishment of the caliphate and Fulani emirates in northern Nigeria. In any state conquered the former Hausa ruler was replaced by a Fulani Emir. After the conquest a centralized system of government was introduced. The judicial administration of Hausa-Fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called Sharia.

***COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND INDIRECT RULE SYSTEM IN NIGERIA***

The British who have often being credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria, the Portuguese were. The Atlantic Slave Trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic Ocean between Europeans and Africans. This slave trade was the unfortunate channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria. After three centuries came the period of ‘legitimate commerce’. The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. To achieve the establishment and maintenance of a colonial state, a number of measures needed to be taken.

**The Birth of Nigeria as a Geo-Political Entity**

Before 1900, all parts of Nigeria conquered by British was still under their original administration. By 1900, the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British Colonial Office. The first amalgamation was in May 1906 when Lagos was merged with the Southern protectorate. The second amalgamation was in January 1914, the Southern and Northern protectorate were merged. The reason was to aid economical buoyancy. Britain governed Nigeria through Indirect Rule System. This is a system where Britain ruled her colonies through local traditional rulers.