

GEOGRAPHICAL RESOURCES AND THE EMERGENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL (PROFESSIONAL) GROUPS AND INDUSTRIALIZATION: HISTORICAL LESSONS FOR NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract: Extant studies have established that the relationship between man and geography is very important in any historical process since the relationship between man and nature forms the hard-core of economic development of any society. This is in the area of man's ability to meaningfully interact with geography (in this case the environment) to produce that which is necessary for his day-to-day survival. This aspect is well articulated by scholars with specific reference to Gardiner when he opined that „the first premise of all human history is the existence of living individuals”¹. In this way, scholars have argued that all historiographies must begin from these natural bases and their modification in the course of history by man's activity and satisfaction. This is particularly important in the history of Nigeria and the quest for industrialization and development. Unfortunately, in the case of Nigeria, even with abundant natural resources, the nation still remains a major importer of industrial goods and materials. This is contrary to the speculations of Economic historians who have been able to bring out graphically the relationship between man and his environment, arguing that, historically, man's mastery of his geography led to the emergence of professional/occupational groups who through the manipulations of the geography, carved niche for themselves as far as society and economic development is concerned. This was the case of the pre-colonial Nigerian societies. The qualitative method is used for this particular research. Data obtained from primary and secondary sources were deployed to carry out the study with an analytical and narrative historical approach. This includes historical, descriptive, and analytical approaches based on gathered evidence.

Keywords: Geography/Environment; history; Occupation(al groups); Economy; Development

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