**WEEK 2**

i. **TRADE RELATIONS**

The Northern states established flourishing trade relations by which they were able to push further their inter-tribe relations with Oyo, Benin, Igala, Itsekiri in the west, the Igbos in the East. Through the chain of territorial cooperation, they established trade links with Mali, Ghana, Cote-divore and with North Africa.

The births of Islam encouraged inter states trade and in few cases, inter tribal marriage in line with the Islamic tenants. Generally, their economy revolved around common agricultural products, blacksmithing, leather works, art and craft textile technology, the trans Saharan trade and to some extent fishing.

On the western and forest zone, the Yoruba kingdom forged an internal unity which promoted internal and external trade and commerce. lle-ife provided a rallying point for commercial exchange for the Oduduwa descendants. The region was naturally positioned to enjoy borderline patronage. They shared borders with Benin empire which gave them access to the Niger Delta and the Igbo trade and cultural links.

Through the Igala, Nupe, Bornu and Kwara, they were able to establish trade and cultural link with the vast north. They interacted with Ghana, Benin republic and Togo through Badagry and Lagos. Being a major gateway to international trade and commerce, it was insulated (shielded) from inter-tribal wars to dominance. It therefore enjoyed relative peace.

The Igbos of the hinterland mainly restricted themselves to trading with the Niger Delta states which served them as their gateway to external trades involving the Yoruba’s, parts of the North and Cameroons. The Niger Deltans served as middle men and equally became a buffer that shielded the hinter land Igbo’s from uncertainties. The area was rich in agricultural and forestry products, fishing arts and crafts, salves and palm products which attracted the merchant in the 19th Century.

The riverine nature of the Niger Delta States brought the Europeans into contact with them. This led to the development of Calabar, Bonny and Asaba sea ports and cities.

**CONCLUSION**

There were signs to show that there was social and economic interactions among the pre-colonial centres of civilization. These interactions were at some points direct and at some points indirect. These areas of interaction were prominent in the areas of trade, marriage, cultural ties religions, warfare, common ancestral ties/origin, language, arts, crafts and migration.

Each society had a way of linking itself to the outside world. Some states served as buffer states which facilitated the trans-Atlantic and Trans-Saharan trades. These buffer states experienced wars, trade benefits and integration of civilization.

They easily became advanced and developed into cities in modern day Nigeria. They include Kano, Jos, Igbo Ukwu/Onitsha, Benin City, Ibadan, Lagos, Calabar, Bonny/Port Harcourt, Ile-Ife, Warri among others.

The coming of the white men suddenly changed the pace, tune, volume and directions of these relationships by producing new ways of trade commerce, social exchange, governments and technology.

**ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the problems encountered by centres of civilization in pre-colonial Nigeria.