NAME: ODEYEMI MARY IYANUOLUWA

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ASSIGNMENT: In about 3 page review chapter 2,”A historical analysis of the evolution of the Nigerian state “in the salient issues in the government and Nigeria’s politics, (pages 15-32).

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics can be categorized into two namely: the pre-colonial period and the colonial period. The pre-colonial period is the period before the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria, while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the Nigeria. The state Nigeria is a colonial creation. Pre-colonial Nigeria comprised of different independent chiefdoms state, kingdoms and empire.

Although no one knows exactly when people started living in Nigeria, but archaeological evidences have pointed to the fact that man had settled in Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-900,000BC. For man to be able to settle in into his environment properly, he started to hunt animals and gather fruits. He also invented tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools. As Nigeria advanced to the early Stone Age, he began to make hand axes. The discovery of a terracotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places such as Wamba, Kastina-Ala and Jema.

The three major group’s ethnic groups in Nigeria are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa – Fulani. **The Yoruba’s:** they are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria and are united by language. 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. Oduduwa is believed to be the first leader that led the Yoruba to Ile-ife and subsequently sent his sons and grandsons to found other Yoruba kingdoms. The political structures of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature. Each consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands. Each town has a king known as Oba who resides in the palace called “Aafin”. The king also had other rulers of lesser rank and status. The government of the old Oyo Empire is a typical example of the pre-colonial administration in Yoruba land. The first organ of government in Oyo Empire was the king known as Alaafin of Oyo.

**THE IGBO’S**: The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. The Igbo’s are grouped into 5 namely: the Igbo of eastern Nigeria, Igbo of south –eastern Nigeria, Igbo of north- eastern Nigeria, western Igbo and northern Igbo. In the Igbo society, there was no highly centralized authority but instead they had what could be called a diffusion of authority into different groups. They practiced direct democracy and a decentralized system of government. The family was the smallest political unit in Igbo traditional society. Each family was headed by an “ofo” title holder. Age grade 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 Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in traditional Igbo society. All the male adult members usually met in this assembly to perform legislative functions. The Igbo’s believe in re-incarnation, the religious lives of the Igbos were surrounded by mysticism and superstitions

**HAUSA:** Hausa land is located in the Northern part of Nigeria. Before 1804, the northern part of Nigeria was made up of 14 states, and they were of two distinct groups. The first group consists of seven states called “Hausa Bakwai” state that is Hausa legitimate states. The second group consists of the remaining seven states and were known as “Hausa banza” states that is Hausa illegitimates states.

Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the 14th century. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. The emir was an absolute monarch in his emirate; he was the political, administrative and spiritual leader. Important title holders in the Emir’s cabinet included: Sarkin Fada, Waziri, Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Sarkin Dan Doka, Sarkin Ruwa, just to mention a few. To make the local government efficient and effective, each emirates was divided into districts and an official known was” Hakimi”. The judicial administration of Hausa – Fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called sharia. Sharia courts were established throughout the Emirates and each was headed by a trained sharia court judge called Alkali.

Before the year 1900, all the different parts of Nigeria conquered by the British were still under their original administration. But by 1900, the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British colonial government. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria. The principle reason for this is the same as that of May 1906. Sir Frederick Lugard ( later became lord) is best known as the father of the January 1914 amalgamation. Indirect rule is a system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional rulers. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.