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 REVIEW CHAPTER2

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. The pre-colonial period is the period before coming if the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria.

The Nigerian states is a colonial creation. It is a product of a historical arrangement that arose out of European adventure with its eventual culmination in the colonization of Africa. On the west, Nigeria is bordered by Benin, on the north,ny Niger, and on the east, by Cameroon. In its extreme northeastern corner, lake chad separates Nigeria from the country of Chad. Nigeria stretches roughly 700miles from west to east and 650 miles from south to north. There are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that mad had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9000BC. The artefacts, mostly stone tools, found by archaeologists further confirmed that Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilization. The stone age can be divided into several periods. These are; early stone age 3,000,000-35,000BC; middle stone age, 35,000-15,000BC and Late stone age, 15,000-500BC. **The achievement of early man;** the man who lived in Nigeria thoseyears worked hard to cope with his new environment. He began to hunt the animals and gathered fruit. But he soon began to invent tools consisting pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools. Early man in Nigeria advanced from the early stone age. He began to make hand Axes. Similar tools have been located earlier by archeologists who worked outside Nigeria at a site in ST Acheul in Northern Nigeria. These tools were made during the middle stone age and late stone age. Small stone tools believed to be used for hunting have been located in jos, plateau state and iwo eleru in ondo state. Early man then proceeded to invent another type of tool, which is a heavy chopper. Its more efficient in cutting than existing tools. NOK CULTURE; the discovery of a terracotta(burn clay) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places such as Wamba, Katsina-Ala and Jema. The area where these terracotta figurines were found is called the Nok culture or civilization area. The Nok is believed to be a transitional civilization between the stone age and the iron age in Nigeria because of the presence of a combination of stone and iron objects. **Benin civilization;** was important for its art-work. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory and cast objects in bronze and brass. Bronze casting was introduced into benin by an ife artist. They cast wooden doors and ivory masks. **Ife civilization;** ifeis important because of its terracotta and bronze head, objects such as stools and figures were carved on hard stone called QUARTZ while animal and human figures were carved from granite and decorated with iron nails. An example is Opa Oranmiyan in ILE-IFE. Some of the brome heads were said to be portraist of some of the rulers-ooni. Art historians believe that ife art originated from the Nok culture because of the similarities in the two, especially beaded neck, wrist and ankles. **Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Yoruba land;** the yorubas are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria and are united by language. They trace their origin from their origin Oduduwa who was the founder of the Yoruba kingdom. Ile-ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yoruba people. Johnson traced the origin of the Yoruba to the East according to him, the Yoruba originally came from the North-Eastern area of Africa. 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 kingdom. **Political structure of the pre-colonial** **Yoruba land;**  each consisted of a capital town, subordinate towns, villages, and farmlands. Each king has a king knoen as Oba who resides in the palace called Aafin. The king also had other rulers of lesser rank and status. The lesser rulers were in charge of the surbodinate towns and wore crowns made of white beads known as sese ofun. Another group is the Baale and the Oloja. The Oloja were the fourth rank of leaders and they ruled over the farmlands. At the lowest level were the compound heads(Baale). They formed the lowest consultative group in town affairs. At the apex was a group of civil hiefs(igbimo ilu) headed by the king. This body in the various Yoruba towns were called different names such as Oyomesi, Ewarefa. **The oyo empire** ; the ogboni cults administration: The Ogboni cult had a very vital position in Yoruba society. It played a mediatory role in any conflict between the oyomesi and the Alaafin. It was a kind of counter power to the oyomesi as well. **The army:** its head was conferred with the coveted title of Are-Ona-Kankanfo. They were expected to live outside the capital. They were modelled after the central government. They were administered by the princes, minor kings and Baale(provincial governors). But the Alaafin had personal agents, ilari, all over the provinces. **Historical background of pre-colonial system in igbo land;** the igbo are grouped into five sub-cultures which are: the igbo of Eastern, igbo of south-Eastern Nigeria, igbo of North-Eastern Nigerian, the western igbo and Northern igbo. The family was the smallest political unit in 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 elderd meeting where issues affecting presided over the council of elders meeting where issues affecting the lives of the people were discussed. The age grade were strongly organized among the northern and southern igbo people. The communities organized themselves through the age grad, for work, war and government. They collected fines from offenders. Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in traditional igbo society. In acient times, the Oha-na-eze meetings were held in the open villages square. **Political structure of the pre- colonial hausa land;** the Sarki was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. The Sarkin kasar combined both political and religious/spiritual functions. Islam was adopted and this gave birth to many new political institutions such as the offices of the Galdima, Madawaki, Magaji, Dogari, Yari sarki, Sarki Yau. Sarkin fada; the spokesman of the Emir an organizer of palace workers, Waziri; prime minister of the emirates, Gadadima; the administrator of the capital city, Magaji; government treasurer in charge of the government treasure, yari; the chief superintendent of prison in the emirate. Etc….