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**CHAPTER2**

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE.**

The historical background of Nigeria government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. Pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires.

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Palaeolithic period 500,000-9000BC. Man used stone tool as of then which it was named Stone Age and they are divided into several periods namely: **Early Stone Age, Middle Stone Age and Late Stone Age.**

Early man in Nigeria advanced from the early stone age and began to make hand axes. Early man proceeded to invent another type of tool which is a heavy chopper. It was more efficient in cutting than existing tools. The type was first seen at Sango Bay on the west shores of Lake Victoria in Uganda, East Africa. This is why it is called the Sagoan. One of most active periods of technological efforts in Nigeria was during this period of technological around 500BC to 200AD.During this period there were people who lived in Nigeria who made sculptures. Many were human heads and figures. The site in which the figures were found was the village of Nok. The figures were made of terracotta and they all possessed a distinctive artistic style. Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. They are usually referred to as the centres of ancient civilization. The history of these centres of ancient civilization presents us with the scientific and technological developments of early Nigerian societies such as the Benin civilization, Ife civilization and Igbo Ukwu civilization.

However there are three major ethnic groups in Nigeria namely Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani in the traditionally political system of government.

Firstly, 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. The Yoruba are one of the biggest ethnic groups. Oduduwa set down the five pieces of iron and placed the lump of earth on them. The cockerel then spread the lump of earth on them with its feet throughout the earth. He was the ruler and from ile-ife that he extended his authorities to other Yoruba towns and villages. An example of pre-colonial administration was the Oyo Empire and under it was the alaafin administration, the ogboni cult’s administration and the army.

Secondly the Igbo people are known for their segmentary way of life, this is so because they had no centralized states thus they operated a kind of government without kings. They are grouped into five sub groups namely: the Igbo of the Eastern Nigeria, The Igbo of south-Eastern Nigeria, The Igbo of North Eastern Nigeria, the western Igbo and the northern Igbo. **Professor M.A.Onwuejeogwu** regards the nri version as the only authentic version of origin in existence in the oral tradition of the Igbo. According to Nri version, the ancestor of Eri descended from the sky and scaled the River of Anambra, when he arrived at Aguleri, he met some autochthonous group of people who had no living memory of their own and settled with them. As their population increased, some groups migrated to other parts of igboland to establish their own settlements. The Igbo pre-colonial structure consists of the **family** which was the smallest unit of which each family was headed by an **“ofo”.** The age grades were organized on a village basis and they guard public morality. We also have **the oha-na-eze**, **the secret societies**, and so on as part of pre-colonial structure of the Igbo.

Thirdly is the Hausa. It is located in the Northern Nigeria. Hausa land before 1804 was made up of fourteen states and they consist of two distinct groups. The first group is the seven states known as **“Hausa Bakwai”** states while the second group is of seven states known as **“Hausa Banza”** states. The origin of Hausa states came in when a man named Bayajidda who killed a snake that oppressed the people and from there he married the queen named Duara who bore him a son making it seven sons of which she already had, each of them rules the seven Hausa city states and also first kings. Hence the political structure of the Hausa state succeeded under political institutions known as the Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Dogari, Yari Sarki and Sarki Yau. The sharia law started law started taking shape and new titles like the Alkali and Qadi became common place in the administration of justice. Islam was introduced in Hausa land in the fourteen century and by fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area. Thus important title holders include: Sarkin Fada, Waziri, Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Sarkin Dan Doka, Sarkin Ruwa, Sarkin Pawa, and Yari.

Sarkin Fada is the spokesman of the Emir and the organiser of the palace workers.

Waziri is the prime minister of the Emirate.

Galadima is the administrator of the capital city.

Madawaki is the commander and Head of the Emirate Army.

Magaji is the Government Treasurer in-charge of the government.

Sarkin Dan Doka is the Inspector General of Police Force.

Sarkin Ruwa is the Minister in- charge of Water Resources or the river fishing official.

Sarkin Pawa is the Head of Chairman of Butchers at the Abattoirs.

Yari is the chief superintendent of Prisons in the Emirate.

However the judicial administration of Hausa was based on the Islamic legal system called **sharia**. Shari courts were established throughout the Emirates and each was headed by a trained sharia court judge Alkali and the chief justice of the sharia courts was called **Grand Khadi.**

**Indirect rule in Nigeria**.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade was the channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria. The trade got to maturity in the 16th century. For close to three centuries, coastal Nigeria’s relations with the British were dominated by the trans-Atlantic slave trade, but the early decade of the 19th century, the British decided to abolish the trans-Atlantic slave trade. They did so through the operations of the British West African Naval Squadron. Europeans introduced Gun –boat of which they said it was important for the attack and when all these where happening, the British took Lagos as a colony in 1861 and the rest was taken in 19th century because of the signed treaties that was made by the leaders and the military conquest of states and deportation of rulers. The struggle of European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. Britain colonised Nigeria, Ghana etc, as from 1898, the British government sought to establish and maintain a colonial state in Nigeria of which they removed all visible opposition to the imposition of colonial rule, expansion and consolidation of British over the territory later known as Nigeria. May 1906 was when the amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of British in Nigeria. The second amalgamation was that of January 1914 of which the Northern and southern Nigeria were amalgamated. Lord Frederick Lugard is best known for the father of the 1914 amalgamation.

In conclusion, Britain governed Nigeria by means of Indirect Rule of which is the system of Britain ruling her colonies through local traditional rulers.