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**REVIEW OF CHAPTER 2: AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIAN STATE.**

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves two periods; the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. 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 Nigeria.

The Nigerian state 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. Before the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These include the Borno Empire, the Hausa States, and the Sokoto Caliphate in the North; the Igbo segmentary societies in the East; Benin Kingdom and the Oyo Empire in the West and several ethnic identities in the Benue Valley. These ethnic groupings significantly differ in their historical, social and cultural make-ups.

The country Nigeria is bordered to the south by the Bights of Benin and Biafra, which are on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. On the west, Nigeria is bordered by Benin, on the North, by Niger, and on the east, by Cameroon. In its extreme northeastern corner, Lake Chad separates Nigeria from the country of Chad. Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from west to east and 650 miles from south to north, covering an area between 30 and 150 E longitude and between 40 and 140 N latitude.

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown. There are archaeological evidences that shows man settled in this region now known as Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9,000BC. Some of the places where man lived in the remote past include: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. They are usually referred to as the centers of ancient civilization. The achievement of early man includes adapting to his environment to get food to eat, making of hand axes, heavy chopper and making of sculptures.

**Traditional political institutions in pre-colonial Nigeria**; the Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria. They trace their origin to Oduduwa who was the founder of the Yoruba Kingdom. Ile-ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yorubas. There are different versions of the traditions of origin. One version traced the origin of Yoruba to the east. That is from Mecca. It is from Egypt after several years of journey that the ayaoruba finally settled in ile-ife. The second version which is the Oke Oramfe’s version. In this, it was believed that the earth was covered with water and God sent some of his messengers to the earth with different objects and materials of which the world was created. 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 a place called “Aafin”. His paraphernalia of office included a beaded crown (Ade), slippers (bata), horse tail (irukere) and scepter (Ase). The Oba is both the spiritual and political head of the kingdom. He is the supreme authority and his words are law and biding on everybody.

**The Igbo people** are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is because from the ancient times, they had no centralized states. Consequently, they operated a kind of government without kings. They are grouped into five sub-cultures: the Igbo of eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria, the Igbo of north-eastern Nigeria, the western Igbo and the northern Igbo. On the origin of the Igbos, one of the most popular versions of the migratory stories of origin is the one that points to Israel. This assumption is based on the so-called similarities between the cultures of the Igbo and the ancient Hebrew. Some Igbo scholars consider themselves as off-shoots of the lost tribes of the Hebrews who migrated southward. Another version is the Nri version; the ancestor of the Igbo, Eri, descended from the sky and sailed down the River 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. In the Igboland, direct democracy was practiced or a decentralized system of government. Although, there was no highly centralized authority, some socio-political institutions existed in each village to perform legislative, executive, administrative, military and judicial functions. Such institutions included the family, council of elders, age grades and secret societies.

**The Hausa land** is located in NorthernNigeria. Hausa land, before 1804, was made up of fourteen states and they were of two distinct. The first being the “Hausa Bakwai” that is, Hausa legitimate states; there are seven states in this. The second being the “Hausa Banza” that is, Hausa illegitimate states. Hausa Bakwai states are; Daura, Biram, Zaria, Katsina, Kano, Rano and Gobir. Hausa Banza states are Nupe, Gwari, Yauri, Bauchi, Zamfara, Kebbi, Yoruba.

Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda, an Arab prince who travelled to the Sahel from Baghdad. He killed a monstrous snake that oppressed the people of Daura, and he married the queen. The queen had six sons already, and she produced another son with Bayajidda, and each of these sons ruled one of the seven Hausa city-states, becoming the first kings. The combined kingdoms of Hausa land were sometimes called the Daura, since Daura is the place where Bayajidda supposedly founded the Hausa people. The “Sarki” was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. He worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organised court. Sarkin Kasar, which means “ruler of the land,” was the full title given to any effective and efficient head of Hausa State. The Sarkin Kasar combined both political and religious/spiritual functions. He was also the chief executive and judge of the State, but he was aided by a council of state. At the district level, the government was modelled after that at the national level. It is worthy of note that between 14th and 15th centuries, the socio-political organisation of Hausa States took another shape. For instance, Islam was adopted and this gave birth to many new political institutions such as the offices of the Galadima, Madawaki, Magaji, Dogari, Yari Sarki and Sarki Yau.

Islam was introduced to Hausa land in the fourteenth century, and by the fifteenth century it was accepted as the religion of the ruling class. The Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio of 1804 further strengthened and consolidated the religion in this area.

**The Colonial Administration;** The British who have often been credited with the creation of Nigeria were not the first Europeans to land in Nigeria. The Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive Nigeria through Bini Kingdom. The Trans-Atlantic slave trade was the unfortunate channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria but it was abolished in the 19th century.

The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century. Each of the European powers was given the opportunity to establish colonies where it had vested interest. The scramble for Africa, by these European powers led to the partitioning of Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884–85. Britain colonized Nigeria, Ghana, the Gambia and Sierra Leone in West Africa.

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 Office. The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria. British government amalgamated Lagos colony and protectorate with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria to form the new colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

The second amalgamation which was that in 1914 in January. The British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria.