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19/MHS 11/075
Pharmacy
GST 203

A 3-page review of Chapter 2 [An historical analysis of the evolution of the Nigeria State]

The historical background of Nigerian government and politics involves the pre-colonial period and the colonial period in Nigeria. Prior to the emergence of the Nigerian state, pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, states, kingdoms and empires. These includes; Borno Empire, the Hausa states, the Sokoto Caliphate in the North, the Igbo segmentary societies in the East, Benin Kingdom and the Oyo Empire in the West. Nigeria stretches roughly 700 miles from west to east and 650 miles from South to north, covering an area between 3° and 15° E longitude and between 4° and 14° N latitude.

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 - 9000 BC. Nigerians also took part in the stone-age civilisation. The early man invented tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools. There is evidence of more advanced technology in various parts of Nigeria during the bronze and metal age. The active periods of technological efforts in Nigeria was during 500 BC to 200 AD.

Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past included; Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin. The discovery of a terracotta (burnt clay) by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places such as Wamba, Kasting-Ala and Dema. The area where these terracotta figurines were found is called the Nok culture or civilisation area. Benin was important for its art-work. The craftsmen of Benin carved in wood and ivory. Ife is important because of its terracotta and bronze heads. 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. Some bronze objects and ornaments were accidentally discovered while digging a toilet pit at Igbo Ukwu in 1959. The sites excavated at Igbo Ukwu have been dated to the middle of the 9th century A.D.

Traditional political institutions in pre-colonial Nigeria which includes the three majority ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. The Yorubas are one of the largest ethnic group in Nigeria and are united by language. They 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. Oke Oranfe is located in Ile-Ife; it is believed to be the centre from 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. The first organ of government in Oyo empire was the king known as Alafin of Oyo.

The Igbo people are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life. This is due to the fact that they had no centralised states. The Igbo 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. One of the most popular versions of the migratory stories of origin of the Igbo people is the one that points to Israel. According to Nri version, the ancestor of the Igbo, Eri, descended from the sky and sailed down the River Anambra. In the Igbo traditional society, there was no highly centralised authority but instead they had what could be called a diffusion of authority into different groups. The family was the smallest political unit in Igbo traditional society. Oha-na-eze was a form of general assembly in traditional Igbo society. The official religion practiced in pre-colonial Igbo land was the traditional religion.

Hausa land is located in Northern Nigeria. Hausa lands before 1804 was made up of fourteen states and they were of two distinct groups. The first group consist of seven states called Hausa Bakwai states, that is, Hausa legitimate states. The second group consist of the remaining seven states and were known as Hausa banza states. Oral tradition attributed the origin of the Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda. The combined kingdoms of Hausa land were sometimes called the Daura. Islam was not introduced to the region on any discernible scale until the eleventh century.

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19/MAY/2025
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The Sarki was known as the head of any typical Hausa state. He worked with a series of officials in a well-organised court. The Sarkin Kasa combined both political and religious/spiritual functions. Between 14th and 15th centuries, the socio-political organisation of Hausa states took another shape. Some new titles such as Alkali and Qadi's (Judges) became commonplace in the administration of justice. 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. In every state conquered, the former Hausa ruler was replaced by a Fulani Emir. The whole of the former Hausa kingdom was divided into two confederations. The Emir was an absolute monarch in his emirate, he was the political, administrative and spiritual leader. The Emir controlled economic activities within his emirates. However, in performing these functions, the Emir was assisted by a group of district/village heads, a body of councillors, and council of advisers, with which consultation is made regarding matters affecting the emirate.

The judicial administration of Hausa-Fulani was based on the Islamic legal system called Sharia. The chief justice of the Sharia courts was called Grand Khadi. 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 Atlantic Slave Trade was the trade carried on across the Atlantic Ocean between the Europeans and Africans. It became more important in the 15th century with the arrival of the Portuguese. The struggle among the European powers for colonies led to the partitioning of Africa among them in the 19th century.

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, the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria. The British officers defined the framework of the policies to be adopted and left the implementation to the local personnel or the rulers.