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CHAPTER TWO

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AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE

INTRODUCTION

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 the coming of the colonialists to Nigeria while the colonial period refers to the era that colonial administration was established in the country Nigeria.

EARLY MAN IN NIGERIA

The exact time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but there is archaeological evidence from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in the region now known as Nigeria since the Paleolithic period 500,000-9000BC. The artifacts, 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 ACHIEVEMENTENTS OF EARLY MAN

The man who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment. First, he needed food. For this purpose he began to hunt the animals and to gather fruits. But he soon begun to invent tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools. Archaeologists called the tools the Oldowan-type tools. This is because this type of tool was first identified by the archaeologists in the Olduvai Gorge in Tanazia. Early man in Nigeria advanced from the Early Stone Age. He began to make hand axes.

THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY NIGERIA SOCIETIES

Major Landmark in Early Nigeria History: Information on the major land makers in early Nigeria history was made possible through the excavation work done on places where man lived in Nigeria in the very remote past. Some of the places where man lived in Nigeria include: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others.

Nok culture/Civilization

The discovery of a terracotta (burnt clay) head of a monkey by tin miners in Nok in 1936 prompted more discoveries in other places.

Benin Civilization

Ife Civilization

Igbo Civilization

TRADITIONAL POLITICAL INSTITUTION IN PRE-COLONIAL NIGERIA

In this section, the three majority ethnic groups of Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria traditional political system of government shall be examined.

The Oyo Empire

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.

1. The alaafin Administration
2. The Ogboni Cult’s Administration
3. The Army

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRE-COLONIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM IN IGBO LAND

1. The Igbo of eastern Nigeria
2. The Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria
3. The Igbo of North-Eastern Nigeria
4. The Western Igbo
5. The Northern Igbo

THE BIRTH OF NIGERIA AS A GEO-POLITICAL ENTITY

Before the 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 a new colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria.

The second amalgamation was that of 1914. In January 1914, the British government amalgamated Northern and Southern Nigeria.