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**ASSIGNMENT ON A REVIEW OF AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE (CHAPTER 2)**

The Nigerian state/ government and policies evolved from the pre-colonial period and colonial period, Nigeria is best described as a state of colonial creation. Pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms, stated, kingdoms and empires, these includes the Borno Empire, the Hausa state 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. All these groupings differ in their historical, social and cultural make-ups. The country is bordered to the South by the bights of Benin and Biafra, which are located on the gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. On the west, Nigeria is bordered by Benin, on the north by Niger and east by Cameroon, in the extreme north eastern corner is Lake Chad which separates Nigeria from Chad.

There are archaeological evidences from different parts of Nigeria which pointed to the fact that man had settled in Nigeria since the Palaeolithic period (500,000-9000BC), though the exact time man began to live in Nigeria is unknown. Most of the artefacts found by archaeologists which were stone tools also took part in the civilisation of the Stone Age. The excavation of a Stone Age skeleton at Iwo Eleru near Akure in Ondo state has thrown more light on the earliest occupation of Nigeria. The skeleton was dated some 12,000 years ago and this suggests that the country has been long inhibited.

The man who lived in Nigeria during those years worked hard to cope with his environment which included his search for food; through hunting animals and gathering fruits, later on he started to invent tools consisting of pebbles made into chopping and cutting tools which is now called the Oldowan-type tools by the archaeologists, this was because this tool was first discovered by the archaeologists the Olduvia , Gorge in Tanzania. The early man later advanced to the use of metals (axes) which was later refined in the middle Stone Age and late Stone Age. During the bronze and metal age was one of the most active periods of technological efforts in Nigeria, here sculptures were made by the people who lived in Nigeria. The figures were made of terracotta and they possessed a distinctive artistic style.

Excavation work has revealed where men first settled in Nigeria, some of the places where man lived in Nigeria in the past are: Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others. They are also referred to as the centres of ancient civilization, their history presents us with scientific and technological developments of early Nigerian societies.

The three major ethnic groups in Nogeria are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. The Yorubas trace their origin from Oduduwa, Ile- Ife is regarded as the ancestral home of the Yorubas. The political structure of the Yoruba kingdoms were similar in nature; each consisted of a capital towns, subordinate towns, villages and farmlands, each town has a king called Oba who resides at the palace called Alafin. The Oba is both the political and spiritual head of the kingdom.

The Igbo people are best known for their cephalous way of life. The Igbos have no centralised state, 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 Northern Igbo. The origin of the Igbos are based on two stories, the migration story that points to Israel which is the most popular migration version and the other story is the Nri version which is the only authentic version of origin in existence in the oral tradition of the Igbo. In the political structure of the Igbo, there is no highly specialised authority, though some socio-political institutions existed in the villages to perform legislative, administrative, military and judicial functions; their authority is diffused into diverse groups.

The Hausa land which is located in the Northern part of Nigeria was made up of 14 states before 1804, and they were of 2 distinct groups which were the: Hausa bakwai states i.e. Hausa legitimate states and the Hausa banza states i.e. illegitimate states. The origin of the Hausa people follows an oral tradition attributed to the Bayajidda legend which occurred in Daura and is known as the place where Bayajidda supposedly founded the Hausa people. The sarki is known as the head of any typical Hausa state and he worked with a retinue of officials in a well-organised court. Islam was introduced to the Hausa land in the fourteenth century and was accepted as the religion of the ruling class in the fifteenth century.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to arrive in Nigeria through Bini kingdom. The trans- Atlantic slave trade was the channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria. The trans- Atlantic slave trade was abolished in the nineteenth century. Also in the nineteenth century Africa was partitioned among the Europeans due to the struggle among the European powers for colonies. Africa was then partitioned after the Berlin conference of 1884-1885.

The May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria, the 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 was that of January 1914 where the British government amalgamated the Northern and Southern Nigeria.