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CHAPTER 2

A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGERIA STATE

Nigerian government and politics historical background involves the pre-colonial and colonial period.

Pre-colonial period before the coming of the colonialists and colonial period which is the era of colonialism.

Pre-colonial Nigeria comprises of different independent chiefdoms,states,kingdoms and empires which include Borno empire,the hausa states etc.

The time when man began to live in Nigeria is unknown but from archaeological evidences it can be said since the Palaeolithic period 500,000-9000BC.

The early man achieved a lot because he had to learn to cope with his environment to be able to get basic needs such as food which also led to the invention of tools like sagoan,they also made sculptures.

The major land marks in early Nigerian history was made possible through the excavation work done on places where man lived in

Nigeria, places like; Nok, Igbo Ukwu, Ife and Benin among others, they are called centres of ancient civilization.

Historical background of pre-colonial political system in Yoruba land :the Yoruba people trace their origin to Oduduwa who was the founder of the Yoruba kingdom .Ile-ife is regarded as their ancestral home ;the political structure each town had a king called the Oba who stayed in the palace called Aafin.

The Igbo land: They are best known for their segmentary or acephalous way of life their kind of government operated without kings.The political structure was what was called diffusion of authority into different groups,the family was the smallest political unit headed by an Ofo title holder,the Okpara/Ozo title presided over the council of elders meetings

The Hausa land: located in the northern part of the country,before 1804 it was made of 14 states which was divided into 2 groups.The first Hausa bakwai and the second group Banza bakwai, the oral tradition say the origin of Hausa states to a man named Bayajidda who killed a monstrous snake that oppressed the people of Daura and he married the queen.Sarki is the head in the Hausa state.

The first Europeans to land in Nigeria were the Portugese who began slave trade,the trans-alantic slave trade was the unfortunate channel that first put the British in contact with Nigeria.

By the time 1900 the whole Nigeria was under the responsibility of the British Colonial Office,May 1906 amalgamation is known as the first ever amalgamation of the British in Nigeria,the second amalgamation was that of 1914,Nigeria was governed by Britain by the system of indirect rule.