



An Analysis of the Zabarmawa Entrepreneurship in Gusau Metropolis, 1930- 2000

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Abstract

This paper discusses major areas of economic activities of Zabarmawa migrant community in Gusau metropolis in the 20th century. Zabarmawa migrants in Gusau engage a substantial number of economic enterprises and they have positively impacted on the economic life of Gusau metropolis. The major areas of economic activities of the Zabarmawa discussed include the sale of cassettes (Yan cassette), second hand clothes, gold and mining trading, tourist car trading, bureau de change and water selling. The tool for data collection of this study include interview schedule to key Zabarmawa informants in the metropolis. This is in addition to the use archival of related secondary materials obtainable from national archives and libraries.

Keywords: Zabarmawa, Entrepreneurship, Migration, Islamic Scholarship, Drought and Famine.

Introduction

Gusau metropolis is situated along the trade routes that linked the northern territories with the western and eastern territories in the trans-Saharan trade since pre-colonial period. In the 20th century, Gusau metropolis has all the characteristics of a traditional Birni. Thus, it was among the emergent towns and cities (*Birane*) during the period of the defunct Sokoto Caliphate.¹ It emerged second in terms of population and commerce in the Sokoto province. Zabarmawa migrants with their arrival in Gusau immediately engaged in different forms of economic activities. Zabarmawa are courageous and hardworking in terms of earning. Their habit amid the climate and economic position of Gusau provides favorable condition for Zabarmawa to settle and engage in different forms of entrepreneurship.² It is important to provide the background of Zabarmawa migration to Gusau.

The Push and Pull Factors for Zabarmawa Migration to Gusau

Factors responsible for Zabarmawa migration to Gusau metropolis are classified into push and pull factors. Amin's theory indicates that the attraction-repulsion mechanism (push-pull effects) constitutes the very core of the migratory phenomena.³ In a similar vein, this phenomenon according to Cohen,⁴ is best explained in terms of push and pull factors. Hence it is agreed that migrants may either be pushed out of originally inhabited areas due to some adverse circumstances or may pulled to an area with much greater opportunities. It is against this background that drought and famine in their homeland provided the initial 'push' factor to northern Nigeria, especially in the period 1930 to 1931 (the year of Locust Larva). The Zabarmawa during this period therefore came in search of more productive land (as the main pull factor). Prior to the period of the drought in the 1930s, there was no organized movement of Zabarmawa community

¹G Nadama, "Urbanization in the Sokoto Caliphate: Case Study of Gusau and Kaura Namoda" in Y.B Usman (ed) *Study in the History of Sokoto Caliphate*, in Sokoto Seminar Papers, Lagos Third Press International, 1979. P.9

²Oral Interview with Alfari, 97 years, one of the Zabarma ward heads and presently the most elderly person among Zabarmawa at Gusau, at his residence Old Prison Area Tudun Wada Gusau,17-02-2020.

³S. Amin, *Modern Migration in West Africa*, International African Institute, Oxford University Press, 1974, pp. 94-95

⁴A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Case Study of Hausa Migrant in Yoruba Town*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 7-13.

to Gusau metropolis as only individual Zabarmawa migrants came on their own. However, the drought and other environmental problems of 1930s changed the pattern of Zabarmawa movement to Gusau and other northern Nigerian cities. Most of the Zabarmawa pushed to Gusau during this time according to Apeldoorn came from Dosso, Niamey, Teeliberi, and other parts of Zarmanganda, that is, the region north and northwest that constitute the area most affected by the drought.⁵

Drought and Famine

The drought and famine in their source region facilitated the first 'push' factor for their migration to other parts of northern Nigeria. Indeed, they came in search of more productive land as their main pull factor.⁶ The area was characterized by shortfall in production, insufficient rainfall, insect infestation and plagues⁷ Apeldoorn recorded that, the catastrophe of drought and famine was worst in the areas of Dosso and Zarmaganda where substantial number of Zabarmawa resided in Niger Republic. It was deadly with massive exodus and social breakdown, evidence to this was the rampant divorce and abandonment of family.⁸ The Drought and famine that greatly affects Zabarmawa areas of habitations considered to be the push factor responsible for Zabarmawa migration to other parts of Northern Nigeria, Gusau inclusive. Sudano-Sahelian regions of West Africa were seriously affected in the first decade of 20th Century.

The disastrous series of drought and famines amidst with a number of socio-economic reasons created by the colonial policies through the promotion of the production of export crops to the neglect of the locally consumed staple food undermined the mechanisms used to curb the menace of drought in the pre-colonial period. This among others provided the first reason that push Zabarma migration from their area of destination especially in the period 1931 (the year of Locust Larvae). They came in search of productive land.⁹ It was also associated with the colonial conquest of the area. The famine was famous in the area because of its devastating impact.¹⁰ These resulted in the wide spread disruption at the planting period that most field remain unsown. There was increased mortality rate in these areas. People died in their effort to sustain the menace. Many people died in market places in search of grains for self and family consumption. Apeldoorn explicitly recorded that the then Governor of Niger estimated the number of deaths in 1930 in three affected districts (which mostly are occupied by Zabarmawa residents) of Dosso, Niamey and Tillibery to be 26,767.¹¹ Zabarmawa migrants used Birnin Kebbi, Sokoto and Gusau as their destinations. Some of them usually reside in Sokoto for a while before they finally reached Gusau, while others were directly from Dosso, Tillabery and Niamey.¹² Vast fertile land estimated to be 200 hectares in Gusau continue to attract Zabarmawa and other migrant communities from nook and cranny of the West African sub-region since the area is situated on the high plain of Hausaland very suitable for agricultural activities. Its vegetation falls within the Sudan savannah and opened grassland good for cultivation of cereals.¹³

The Railway as a factor in the Migration of Zabarmawa Community to Gusau Metropolis from 1927-1932

Railway was considered to be one of the pull factors in the migration of Zabarmawa to Gusau. In the year 1927, Gusau became a railway terminus and very significant to the growing opportunities. It made the town more attractive to immigrants from different places not only Zabarmawa. Zabarmawa continued to migrate and served as potential labourers in Gusau metropolis. In the 1940s there were 37 labourers in the terminus, 26 among them were Zabarmawa. They loaded and off-loaded goods along the railway station in Gusau. This helped greatly in the rapid growth and

⁵G. J. Apeldoorn, *Drought in Niger*, Vol. 1, Context and Characteristics, Centre for Social and Economic Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1978, p. 15

⁶S.B Muhammed. "Environment, Climate and Man: Drought and its Impact on Katsina Emirate During Colonial Rule, 1903-1960" *B.A. Project* Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 1986. p.47

⁷G.J. Apeldorn, *Drought in Niger*, Vol. I. Context and Characteristics, Centre for Social and Economic Research, A.B.U Zaria, 1978.p.15

⁸Ibid..., p.95

⁹A. U. Alkammawa, "A Socio-Economic History of Zabarmawa Community in Sokoto Metropolis" ..., p.35

¹⁰One of the important effects of the conquest was the disruption of social relation caused by the military operations. According to Watts, the conquest of Zinder is also associated with a famine called *El-commanda*, a word associated with French military conquest. This hardship caused both temporary and permanent migration of many households to Northern Nigeria including Gusau

¹¹G.J Apeldorn, *Drought in Niger*, *Op.cit*,

¹²Among those migrated directly from Dosso and considered to be the first Zabarma settlers in Gusau were: Auta Gareji, Amadu Mai Saje (father to Mai Anguwa Alfari in Gusau), Garba P.Z, Musa Good-Shedi, Malam Muhammadu Zabarma, Adamu Farke, Samaila Baban Amani (The first Zabarma Ward-Head in Gusau),

¹³K.S Chafe, *State and Economy in the Sokoto Caliphate: Policies and Practices in the Metropolitan Districts*, 1804-1903, Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1999, p.18.

development of the town's commercial activities.¹⁴ Subsequent migrations of Zabarmawa to Gusau were recorded up to the period of 1930s. In the year 1930, a substantial number of Zabarmawa households mostly from Dosso and Tllaberi arrived Gusau with the intention of living permanently.¹⁵ A portion of land was given to them by the then Sultan of Sokoto, Hassan Dan Mu'azu [the 16th Sultan of Sokoto Caliphate] to settled.¹⁶ According to Alfari, the land was given to them partly for cordial relationship with Sarkin Katsina of Gusau and partly for the homage paid to the Sultan while on his way to Kaduna. He explained that Zabarmawa gathered together while the Sultan was passing and asked for a permanent place to resides and also for farming which as a result a portion of land was given right from a place called Old Agip North-wards to a place near Rawayya town now Bungudu local government.

French Colonial Policies

The French colonial policies pushed quite a number of Zabarmawa who came to Northern Nigeria where the colonial policies were more liberal.¹⁷ In the French colonies, all Africans were subjected to one form of tax or the other. In spite of the fact, many people lived on the lands that produced no cash crops The taxation policy clearly spelt out that each and every subject in the colony had to pay his tax (poll-tax, livestock requisition taxes, occupational tax, capitation tax, local road tax, exceptional war contribution, special relief tax, caravan and market taxes) in French currency rather than in cowries or kind. This among other things pushed Zabarmawa to other regions where there was enough labour to pay for their heavy taxation.¹⁸

Forced labour, conscription and the exactions of the administrator and the chiefs were other factors responsible for Zabarma migration from French to British colonial territory that is Northern Nigeria including Gusau Metropolis. Avoidance of forced labour had been one of the factors in the migration of zabarma to Gusau Metropolis especially in the year 1930s and 1940s.¹⁹ These and other forms of French colonial policies coupled with the improvement of Zabarma socio-economic condition in Gusau²⁰ fulfilled and pushed a substantial number of Zabarma migrants to Northern Nigeria.

In contrast to the above, Asiwaju argues that the impact of colonial rule did not uniformly affect all tribal groups in Niger republic. He further remarks that the Tuareg were the most negatively affected not Zabarmawa who considered ally with the French colonial masters.²¹ It was against this background that Bako and Alkammawa claim that, the impact of colonialism in the movement of Zabarmawa to Northern Nigeria remained marginal since the colonialism favoured Zabarmawa in the first instance.²² Most of the Zabarmawa came to Gusau in search of fertile land suitable for agricultural productions, to escape the hardship of droughts and famines. Others were termed as seasonal migrants (*Yan Cin-Rani*). Also, with the extension of railway lines to Gusau in the 1920s and 1930s Zabarmawa served as potential labourers in the terminus.

In terms of colonial administration, British were more liberal than their French counterparts as they squeezed more out of Africans through imposition of high levies for military purposes.²³ In French Colonies, the trader, the hunter and fishermen had to pay for special animal permit to operate. All women and children above the age of eight, ten and fifteen (depending on the territory) also paid taxes. During World War I, it was estimated that about 61,000 men left French

¹⁴ K.S. Chafe, *Ibid*, P.23

¹⁵ Oral interview with Alhaji Umar Bachiri, 56 years, Abdu Gusau Polytechnic Talata Mafara, on 17 -09-2019.

¹⁶ Mai Anguwa Alfari..., also Alhaji Atto Sabon-Garin Zabarma..., also Alhaji Umar Bafillace..., also Malam Muhammadu (Malam Mammani) Gusau, 89, Anguwar Sabon Fegi Gusau

¹⁷ A. Sama'ila, "Colonialism and the Growth of Border Areas in Nigeria and Niger Republic: The Illela-Konni Example" in *Kaduna Journal of Historical Studies, Vol, 2 No.1*, Department of History Kaduna State University, Kaduna, Nigeria, September 2010. pp.126-127

¹⁸ M. Crowder, *West Africa Under Colonial Rule...*, p.338

¹⁹ *Ibid...*, p.338. See also, A. F. Usman, "Inter-Group Relations in Gusau: A Case Study of Yoruba and Hausa, C.1920-1996," *PhD Thesis*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 2003. p.102

²⁰ The provision of deep wells has made possible permanent settlement along borders between Nigeria and Niger Republics. Also, New wells sited near to the International Frontiers have attracted population from French territory to move over and settled.

²¹ A.I. Asiwaju, "Migration as a Protest": French West Africa with Special Reference to the Ivory Coast and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) Up to 1945" in A.I Asiwaju (ed) *West Africa Transformations: Comparative Impact of French and British Colonialism*, Malt House Press LTD, 2001.p.83

²² A. Bako and A. U, Alkammawa, "Further Reflection on Zabarma migration and Settlement in Sokoto Metropolis...", p.134

²³ A. Bako, *Sabon Gari Kano: A History of Immigrants and Inter-Group Relations in the 20th Century*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Press, Sokoto, 2006. pp. 46-47

West Africa for British Colonies, especially Northern Nigeria in order to avoid conscription.²⁴ Yet the reaction of Zabarmawa to French colonialism was liberal.

Islamic Scholarship

Gusau as one of the Islamic centres in the 20th century witnessed the arrival of migrants from different parts of West Africa, Northern and Southern Nigeria. Historically, the establishment of Gusau as a political entity is an aftermath of the 19th century Jihad of Usmanu Danfodiyo which appointed one of his disciples, Malam Muhammad Sambo DanAshafa to become the leader of Gusau. Going by this reason therefore, one of the Zabarmawa migrant groups purposely left their original homes to Northern Nigeria (Gusau) for the pursuance of Islamic knowledge. To corroborate this statement, Qur'anic School was established by Abdullahi Bazabarme near Emir's palace in Gusau. This was in connection with Alkammawa's finding that Sokoto town became attracted to different migrant communities especially from the Sudan-Sahelian sub-region due to its position as the Headquarter of the Caliphate and also a center of Islamic scholarship. Therefore, several groups of Zabarmawa moved to Sokoto in search of knowledge.²⁵ More so, Gusau witnessed the same influx of different Zabarmawa Islamic scholars along with their students from Dosso state of Niger republic in the 1940s.²⁶ They settled at a place called Kofar Mani near Emir's palace Gusau and later sparsely moved to Anguwar Zabarma, Sabon Fegi, Sabon Gari and Janyau *ta Gabas*. In Gusau the presence of these Islamic scholars led to the establishment of Anguwar Malamai within the Zabarma settlement in Tudun Wada area of Gusau metropolis.²⁷ They met Fulani Islamic scholars in Gusau and continued the pursuance of Islamic knowledge in branches of knowledge such as Islamic theology, Jurisprudence, Qur'anic interpretation and commentary etc. Thus, a portion of Zabarmawa migrated in search of scholarship as their prime activity.²⁸ The year 2000 was another milestone in the migratory process of different ethnic groups from far places to Gusau in order to have peace and justice accorded by the introduction of shari'a legal system in the state. A considerable number of Zabarma on the average migrated to Gusau. They arrived as scholars and students with the intention to have an insight on the strategies used in the introduction of Islamic sharia legal system in the state ²⁹.

Unemployment

This also provided another push factor for the Zabarmawa migration to other parts of Northern Nigeria especially within the period under study. Unemployment and poverty forced the Zabarmawa movement from Dosso, Tillaberi and Zarmaganda of Niger Republic to Northern Nigeria (Gusau) in search for employment.³⁰ Most of the Zabarmawa who came in the 1920s and 1930s became engaged in menial job such as labourers for loading and off-loading in the railway station, potential workers in the agricultural production and other local industries such as blacksmithing (Malam Alfa Muhammad), tanning, pottery, dyeing and weaving, hair dressing, tea selling, water selling, camel transport, rope and mats weaving and much later in cotton ginneries (Malam Musa Goodshedi, Amadu P.Z.) usually as watchmen.³¹

In the year 1996, many Zabarmawa migrated to Gusau to secure jobs as either skilled or unskilled labourers. The creation of Zamfara state in 1996 by the military administration was a turning point to Zabarma migratory phenomenon in Gusau metropolis, as the town serve as state headquarter which provided people with variety of jobs and other services to earn their living. The change in social status of different class of people provided the needs for more social services from both skilled and unskilled labourers.³² Zabarmawa engaged in different economic activities. Civil service, selling of cassettes, second hand clothes, trade in gold, currency Bureau de change, provision stores, weaving of mats, rope, blanket, *Kareri*, (for men) and other social services like water vendors, Mechanics, Shoe-making and shining. The year 1996, provided an enormous migratory flow of Zabarmawa to Gusau metropolis. Zabarmawa of different professions like business merchants, office workers, Executive of business firms, skilled workers (mostly from Kebbi and Sokoto) and intellectuals were said to have migrated to Gusau. ³³ That was as a result of the state creation [Zamfara state] which is considered to

²⁴A. Boahen, *General History of Africa VII, Africa Under Colonial Domination, 1880-1935*, UNESCO, 1990, pp.70-71

²⁵A. U. Alkammawa, *A Socio-Economic History of Zabarmawa Community in Sokoto Metropolis...*, p.36

²⁶ Interview with Mai Anguwa Hinsu Adamu, 76, Years, Ward-Head in Zabarma Area Tudun Wada, Anguwar Malamai Area. Malam Abdullahi Bazabarme, Malam Isah, Malam Abdullahi Bazabarme, Malam Isihu Bazabarme, (late) Malam Ali Alfa, Malam Sule, Malam Salihu and Malam Isah Mai Almajirai u Bazabarme, (late) Malam Ali Alfa, Malam Sule, Malam Salihu and Malam Isah Mai Almajirai although Fulani by tribe but he came from Dosso

²⁷Alhaji Umar Bafillace...

²⁸Alhaji Umar Bafillace..., Ibid

²⁹Interview with Malam Abdullahi Alfa, 70years, Islamic Scholar at Sabon Fegi Gusau, on 19-09-2019

³⁰Interview with Malam Muhammad Zabarma, 73years, Retired Civil Servant at his residence, Anguwar Zabarma Tudun Wada Gusau, 26-09- 2019.

³¹ Interview with Maianguwa Alfari, 93 years, retired Army Officer, at his residence, Anguwar Zabarma, on 27-09-2019

³²Alhaji Umar Bafillace..., a Group Interview with Mal Yakubu 67, Mal Alfa Muhammad 72, and Mal Inuwa Mai cassettes 76 at their Residences in Sabon Fegi Area of Gusau Metropolis.

³³Alfari...

be local migration. Most of the unskilled Zabarmawa labourers in the state were from villages of Dosso, Tillibary and Niamey.³⁴

Unemployment and poverty always serve as push factors leading to migration to areas with social and economic opportunities. Therefore, availability of local crafts and industries in Gusau metropolis provided enough chances to Zabarmawa for living.³⁵ This led to the movement of many Zabarmawa to Gusau. In fact, the metropolis became a transition place of Zabarmawa.

Major Areas of Zabarmawa Economic Enterprises in the Metropolis

Trade in Cassettes (*Yan cassette*)

In the colonial era, Europeans came along with their industrial products in northern Nigeria, in form of Radio, Cassette, Radio-Recorders (*Garmaho*) and other audio-visual devices.³⁶ Trade in audio cassettes was one of the earliest Zabarma businesses enterprises in Gusau metropolis. They sell and record cassettes. According to Umar, Zabarma were the dealers of this trade since its inception in Gusau.³⁷ Among these cassette traders were Malam Halidu, Malam Muhammad, Garbebe, Dan Labbi and Malam Musa Mai Cassette. Indeed, most of these Zabarma cassettes dealers migrated from Sokoto, Kebbi and Kano states in the 1970s and 1980s. The Zabarma dominance in the trade was the fact that they have direct contact (they served as middlemen) with the returning pilgrims who were bringing various electronics from Saudi Arabia. Consequently, any electronic equipment brought from Saudi Arabia must pass through the hands of Zabarma merchants before distributing to others in different places, Gusau included.³⁸ Very few indigenes were initiated into the business. Later the indigenes joined the cassette trading with Zabarma in Gusau.³⁹ According to Musa, their major sources of supply were (El-Duniya Cassette Industry) in Kano Old Market area, and Emir Yahaya Sokoto area etc. The dealers mostly are mostly of Zabarma origin. He also ascertained that he was in the trade from 1978 up to 1994 before he left and engaged into other forms of business but only very few Zabarma (Malam Muhammad and Dan Labbi) combined the sales of the two forms of cassettes (Audio-Visual). According to Malam Abdulwahid, they also bought an empty cassette from Kano and dubbed any song or preaching they consider the most patronizing among others.⁴⁰ One thing to note here is that most of the Zabarma cassette traders had diversified to other forms of commercial activities. With the advent of the modern devices for recording and audio sounds the business gradually started to decline. Therefore, majority of Zabarma cassette traders were using the business as a starting point and later move to high demands and more profit business.

Trade in Second Hand Clothes (*Gwanjo*)

Second hand cloth was another trade in which Zabarma have a greater number more than any other tribe in Gusau metropolis. The second hand clothes were not originally for sales rather as assistance to the developing countries through the Red Cross.⁴¹ The east and western communities of Nigeria started to have this assistance in the first decade of 20th century. Thus, Igbo were able to start carrying the clothes down to the northern part of the country for sale.⁴² According to Alkammawa, when Igbo started the business in northern Nigeria, Hausa traders initially refused to patronize due to their dislike of the clothes and socio-cultural ground. In contrast, they engaged in making a proverb: *Dage gwanjo, baka mutu ba kana warin mutuwa, in ka mutu arne ya fika*; Meaning (shorn from second hand cloth, you did not die but you smell the death, when you die, unbeliever is better than you).⁴³ These embarrassing comments on second hand clothes in northern Nigeria specifically among Hausa community prevented many people from wearing gwanjo not to talk of embarking in their trade. Igbo people continued with the business until when the Nigerian civil war broke from 1967 to 1970 and the business became very difficult.⁴⁴ Hence, the business in second hand cloth collapsed since Igbo were the only people with direct access to the source supply.

³⁴A. Abdurrazak Zabarma, 65, Retired Civil Servant, Tudun Wada Gusau, 12- 09- 2019

³⁵The indigenous Craft and industries such as Blacksmithing, Pottery, textile and Cotton, Leather Work, Dying, Tannery, Carving and Calabash etc were also responsible for Zabarma migration and settlement to Gusau metropolis.

³⁶Alkammawa..., p.49

³⁷Oral Interview with Mai-Anguwa Alhaji Umar Bafillace 92years, Ward-Head, Sabon Fegi Gusau, on 28-09- 2019.

³⁸Alkammawa...p.49

³⁹ Oral Interview with Malam AbdulWahid

⁴⁰Alhaji Musa Maicassette, 55 years, former Cassettes Dealer and currently a gold buyer and seller, Block 5F at Polo Shopping Complex, Gusau, on 07-01-2020. Other dealers were Alhaji Sale Mai cassette, Garba, and Alhaji Munkaila among others.

⁴¹M.U Adamu, Confluences and Influences: The Emergence of Kano as a City State....

⁴²A Bako, 'Igbo Entrepreneurs in Sokoto City....

⁴³A, U. Alkammawa..., p. 30

⁴⁴*Ibid*

The involvement of Zabarma migrants as well as their dominance in the trade could be traced back to the mid of 1980s when Zabarama received consignment from Alhaji Shehu Kware and Ahmad Alfazazi in Sokoto.⁴⁵ Another reason for Zabarma dominance into the trade was the introduction of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) on 29th August, 1986. According to Alkali, introduction of SAP led to the devaluation of Naira and massive decline in the real income as well as the purchasing power of the citizenry had encouraged Zabarma and other Nigeriens participate into the trade in second hand clothes. Many of the Nigerien second hand clothes dealers had enjoyed a waiver called “transit” from the Niger government to support the business.⁴⁶

At Gusau the pioneer dealers of this trade started from Sokoto and Kano respectively. They came to Gusau as dealers and their major source according to an informant was Kano, Sokoto, Maradi and Lagos.⁴⁷ These pioneers were Alhaji Ali Bazabarme, Alhaji Hussaini (who is now at Kano in the same business), Malam Halidu, Malam Abdulwahid, Alhaji Ali Kaina and Alhaji Jibrila among others.⁴⁸ According to him, he started the business (Second Hand Clothes) around 1984. He (Malam Abdulwahid) usually received consignment from Lagos and Maradi from two different dealers, one of Zabarma origin and another from Hausa. Malam Abdulwahid reported that his colleague in the business Alhaji Hussaini later became a major dealer and relocated to Kano.⁴⁹ Currently the major dealers in Gwanjo trade at Gusau were the family of Alhaji Hussaini (Zabarma origin). They distributed to other colleagues in the business to sell. Others like Ali Baba, Hussaini Gura and Saidun Malam among others who were from Kano to Gusau for the trade.⁵⁰

Small Scale Mining and Trade in Gold (*sana ar-Zinari*)

Another major area of Zabarma economic dominance in Gusau metropolis has been in the small-scale mining and trade in gold. Although the trade was not new but almost unaware to the indigenous people of Gusau. The emergence of this trade in the 20th century could be traced to the period of Goldsmith/Gold trader’s ordinance of 1935 which granted license to the United African Company Limited (U.A.C) Gusau, for the site situated at plot no. 6 Gusau.⁵¹ Another order, the Goldsmiths (Raw Exemption) Order of 1945 granted another license permit to an individual Igbo man C.N Abuekwe, to monthly purchase 1 Oz (one ounce) of raw gold from Mr, O.A Ogunbanjo, a licensed gold dealer of plot V.20 between 1st January, 1948 and 32st December, 1948. This is for the purpose of winning the trade as licensed goldsmith. In view of the importance of the trade, subsequent licenses were issued to a variety of gold traders in Gusau and Sokoto in the Sokoto Province in 1948.⁵²

Table 1.1: Table Showing Goldsmiths Issued with License in Sokoto Province from 1st January, 1948 to 30th April, 1948.

License No.	Serial No.	Goldsmith Name	Place of Business	Date of Issue
1776	2	G.N Abuekwe	G.N Abuekwe Compound, Gusau	3/1/1948
1777	3	David Achufushi	Okolo’s Premises, Sabon Gari, Gusau	3/1/1948
1778	4	G.N Obi	E.A Onwuzo’s Compound, Rijia Doruwa Sokoto	14/1/1948
1779	5	Sa’idu	Dada’s Compound Gusau	20/4/19481129

Source: Goldsmith License Return/466/1948 to 1967, WJHCBD

⁴⁵A.U. Alkammawa, A Socio-economic History of the Zabarmawa..., pp.47 and 48

⁴⁶R.A. Alkali, *The World Bank and Nigeria*, Baraka Press, Kaduna. 1997. p. 138. Also, Adebayo, O. Olokushi, (ed) *Structural Adjustment and Nigerian Industry, in the Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria*, London, James Gany Ltd, 1993.

⁴⁷ Oral interview with Malam Hassan Maishanu, 64 years, former Dealer in Second Hand Clothes, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau. 6-1-2020

⁴⁸ Oral interview with Malam AbdulWahid, 67 years Second hand clothes dealer, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau on 07-01-2020.

⁴⁹ Malam Abdulwahid....

⁵⁰ Group Interview with the above mentioned, at U.B.A Junction, near Central Police Station Gusau, 12-01-2020.

⁵¹ Waziri Junaidu History and Culture Bureau, Sokoto State-Raw and Application Issue of Permit 1946-1963/No.433

⁵² *Ibid*

Table 1.2: Table Show Recent Exploration License Issued by the Nigeria Mining Cadastre Office to some companies owned by Zabarma origins at Gusau

License Number	Name of the Company	The Mining Minerals	Place of Business	Date of Issuance
11290 E L	Suraj Abdul Ventures Limited	Gold/Iron Ore	No 5 Polo Shopping Complex Gusau	15th July, 2011
11278 E L	Zaki & Sus company Limited	Gold/Copper	No. 17 Polo Shopping Complex	21 st June,2010

Source: Author's Field Work, Gusau Metropolis on 13- 01- 2020

Currently, there is no commercial sector where Zabarma did not dominate especially the gold trade, Bureau de change and small-scale mining. They dominated the trade since its first development in 1990 in Gusau.⁵³ Gold and other mineral deposit in the area of Zamfara state is one among numerous reasons of high influx of Zabarmawa to Gusau. Consequent to this therefore, Gusau metropolis became a transition ground for Zabarmawa community. Zabarmawa are continuously on transit from Arle (Niger Republic) to Gusau to Kano and Dubai (United Arab Emirate UAE) for commercial transaction on gold and gold related objects.⁵⁴ In fact a strong association of Gold buyers has been established in order to aid and protect the interest of the members and the business itself. This association was capable of drawing a loan facility from Government and banks worth N2 billion for its members.⁵⁵ According to Maishanu, (one of the Zabarma Elders) the pioneer Zabarmawa gold traders were late Alhaji Zalika, late Alhaji Noma and Alhaji Adamu Mai-Zinari. They confined themselves to buying and selling of only jewelries during the 1950s and later started buying raw gold from their partners who supply the minerals from the interior sites where there was gold deposit and gold related materials.⁵⁶ Their major areas of supply were Sokoto, Gusau, Plateau and Kebbi (Yauri). With the discovery of many areas of gold deposit in Zamfara (Anka, Maru, Bungudu, Birnin Magaji and Zurmi areas) in the 1990s many people became involved in the business, but Zabarmawa remained the dominant group considering the percentage of the gold buying shops at polo shopping complex Gusau (a renowned gold buying centre in Gusau).⁵⁷

Table 1.3: Some of the Gold Buying Shops Owned by Zabarmawa in Gusau Metropolis

S/NO	Name of Shop/Owner	Place/Location of the Shop
1	Alhaji Adamu Mai-Zinari	Polo Shopping Complex, Kantin Area, Gusau
2	Malam AbdulWhid Khalid	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area
3	Alhaji Bello Malele	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area, Gusau
4	Mustapha Kwando	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area
5	Alhaji Murtala A. P	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area, Gusau
6	Aminu Zakin Hulda	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area
7	Basiru Rufai	Polo shopping Complex, Kantin Area

Source: Author's Field work, 2020

Among the number of shops recorded at the field work only four shops were owned by the indigenes of Gusau metropolis.

In a recent discovery of deposit of gold in Arle Niger Republic, Zabarmawa in Gusau under took a two to three weeks journey, some up to a month to buy the product from Niger Republic and come back to Gusau for processing and selling. Dealers in gold usually sent agents to places of gold availability to buy directly from those buying the product from the source or to sponsor a gang of labourers who usually dig and make a hole until they succeeded in having the minerals.⁵⁸ At Gusau, business in gold and Bureau de Change were inter-connected to one another. The Gold buyers and sellers used the value of dollar in determining the value or price of gold and gold related materials. Thus, most of the major dealers in gold were also engaged in Bureau de Change market⁵⁹

⁵³According to an old man in person of Alhaji Amadu Mai Zinari, residence in Sokoto and chairman of the Association Zamfara Gold Buyers and Sellers Cooperative Union he asserts that the year 1990 was a turning point in the history of gold buying and selling in Gusau. The metropolis according to him witnessed a high influx of both buyers and sellers from within and outside the country. Many people migrate and engaged in to the business either as labourers or buyers.

⁵⁴ Oral Interview with Alhaji AbdulWahid, Vice Chairman, Zamfara Gold Buyers and Sellers Cooperative Union, at his shop, no.5F Polo Shopping Complex, Gusau.

⁵⁵*Ibid*

⁵⁶ Malam Hassan Maishanu and Malam Abubakar Sadauki...

⁵⁷ Malam Aminu Alfa, 52, gold buyer, polo Shopping Complex, 12/1/2020

⁵⁸Malam AbdulWahid...

⁵⁹Abubakar Sadauki ..., on 25-01-2020, Abubakar Sadauki...

Similarly, a lower number of Zabarma engaged in mining activity (small scale mining) immediately after the recent discovery. It was also revealed that, very few Zabarma are found in this type of business, (small scale mining) perhaps the difficulty in the process of site registration or the huge capital (money) to be exhausted before the mining could be matured. They started acquiring land as a mining site in the 21st century, before this time they only confined themselves to the buying and selling of the products. Some of these Zabarma miners are Mal AbdulWahid, Malam Abdullahi Mai Zuhdu, Mal Muhammad Dan Tanin, Malam Abubakar Dan Talatu all from Zabarma origin with exception of only Malam Abdullahi Mai Zuhdu.⁶⁰ One important thing to note was that most of the people digging these products from the source (ground) both Zabarma and Hausas were illegal miners with no license to embark into the business. They consider these minerals resources as natural gift available for everyone's extraction. Prominent Zabarma gold buyers and sellers were Alhaji Adamu Maizinari, Malam AbdulWahid, Alhaji Musa Mai-Cassette, Alhaji Mamuda Halilu, Alhaji Murtala A.P., Usama Maishanu, Muhammad Habibu Osama, Malam Lawal Hussaini (*Salafiyya*) among others.⁶¹ They use their certified associations (Zamfara State Gold Buyers and Sellers Cooperative Union) in the smooth running of the business. The association serves as a medium in any sort of communication between public and private sectors with the rest of its members. Through this association, they made so many negotiations to the benefit of all members.⁶² The association also helps immensely in minimizing illegal mining through some established rules and regulations for the trade. One of these rules is the registration of all member through Cooperate Affairs Commission (CAC) and license dor certified by the Federal Mining Office Gusau.

They use their certified associations (Gusau Association of Gold Buyers and Sellers) in the smooth running of the business. The association serves as a medium in any sort of communication between public and private sectors with the rest of its members. Through this association, they made so many negotiations for the benefit of all members.⁶³ Although Bureau de Change suffered as a result of the current economic situation of the state, (Zamfara) yet the business still exist in Gusau, and seventy-five per cent was controlled by Zabarmawa.⁶⁴

Tourist Car Trade and Bureau De Change

These two related commercial businesses are another Zabarmawa dominant economic activity in Gusau metropolis. These businesses emerged in the 20th century when Zabarmawa dealers and other indigenous tourist car buyers started conveying the second hand cars (*Tokumbo*) usually from Benin Republic for sells in the metropolis.⁶⁵ It started in form of smuggling where most of the dealers engaged other people (Hired Drivers) to convey the products to their various destinations through illegal ways (without paying off any tributes or Custom Duty). Prior to the current administration, from 2015 to date, people that engaged in this business could be classified into two: Those buying and conveying the products legally, (with full payment of duties and other related charges) and those conveying the products illegally, (with no payment of revenue duties and other related charges) and sell at Gusau.⁶⁶ Apparently with the new economic policies introduced by the current administration, most of the tourist cars are legally bought from Lagos wire houses. Virtually, Zabarmawa are found in almost all the tourist cars sell spots in Gusau.⁶⁷

In terms of Bureau de Change, Zabarmawa were at the front. This involves change of currencies in different denominations, from Naira to Dollar, to CFA and vice versa. The change in currency usually depends on the value of the currency from the stock exchange market. For example, the value of a dollar (1D) in Naira was N760 in the stock exchange market at the time of conducting this study. Though, difference of thirty to fifty naira (30-50) could be seen sometimes.⁶⁸ Another important thing, to understand apart from the nature of the business is the source of the currency

⁶⁰Malam Abdullahi Mai Zuhdu,⁶⁴, Small Scale Miner, at his Residence Unguwar Yarima, 12-01-2020. Mal Abdullahi was not a Zabarma origin yet he was among the earliest miner and gold traders in Gusau and still among the prominent buyers and sellers of gold at polo shopping complex.

⁶¹Abubakar Yahaya (Sadauki), 43years, a Gold buyer, at Shop No.5F, Polo Shopping Complex, 25-01- 2020

⁶²*Ibid*,

⁶³*Ibid*, this association is responsible in communicating between government and private agencies in the payment of licenses, royalties and alike. It also requests and collect bank loans (up to ₦ 2billion) for the benefit of its members in Gusau metropolis.

⁶⁴Ahaji Yau Noma, 56 years, Bureau De Change and Gold Dealer, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau, 19-04-2020

⁶⁵Alhaji Usamatu, 45years, Dealer in tourist Cars, Modomawa Motors, Opposite Tudun Wada Mosque, 23 -01- 2020

⁶⁶Alhaji Abba Noma, 56 years, Zabarma dealer in Tourist car, Almadina Motors, near government house Gusau.22-01-2020

⁶⁷The following tourist car sales spots are found in Gusau metropolis: Modomawa, Almadina, Zamfara General, Sauki, Alhuda, Ataka, Arafat, Ni'ima, Sakajiki, Aminu Bungudu,Plaza, I.B.J, (Unity), Maikwano, Alinko,A.B.L,G. Ahmad, Tsega,Dan Aminu, Giwa and Alhaji Umar Iyani Motors. Only at Aminu Bungudu and Sakajiki Motors you could not find a single Zabarma

⁶⁸Interview with Alhaji Gado Abdallah, 45years, Dealer in Gold Buying and Sell and also an Agent in Currency Bureau de change, at his shop, Polo Shopping Complex, 21-1-2020.

being changed. According to Gado, their source was the business major marketer who collaborates with Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) from Kano, Kaduna, Abuja and Lagos to source dollar. They are agents through the main agent. They use their certified associations (Bureau de Change Association of Nigeria Gusau Chapter) in the smooth running of the business. The association serves as a medium in any sort of communication between public and private sectors with the rest of its members. Through this association, they make so many negotiations to the benefit of all members.⁶⁹ Although Bureau de Change was hammered by the current economic situation of the state, yet the business still exist in Gusau, and 75 per cent are being controlled by Zabarmawa.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that Zabarmawa migrants/entrepreneurs play a significant role in the social, economic and political activities of the metropolis. Indeed, Zabarmawa economic activities in Gusau metropolis represent about a century of cooperation, understanding and inter-relations with Gusau people. The earliest Zabarmawa migrants who encouraged Zabarmawa's migration to Gusau metropolis came in the 1930s. Among these migrants were Auta Gareji, Amadu Maisaje, Garba P. Z., Malam Muhammadu Zabarma and Adamu Farke. After some years, they brought their families and relatives, who engaged in menial jobs that enabled them to acquire capital for small scale business enterprises. Afterward, they diversified to modern forms of enterprises such as sale of cassettes, second hand clothes, mining and sale of gold, sale of tourist cars and bureau de change. It also concludes that apart from the major economic areas of dominance, there were other areas where Zabarmawa play significant roles in the development and provision of social services to the host community. These include generator and motor cycle mechanic, petrol and kerosene selling and watchman ship within the metropolis.

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16. Oral interview with Malam Abdullahi Alfa, 70years, Islamic Scholar at Sabon Fegi Gusau, on 19-09-2019
17. Oral interview with Malam Muhammad Zabarma, 73years, Retired Civil Servant at his residence, Anguwar Zabarma Tudun Wada Gusau, 26-09- 2019.
18. Oral interview with Maianguwa Alfari, 93 years, retired Army Officer, at his residence, Anguwar Zabarma, on 27-09-2019
19. Oral interview with Alhaji Abdurrazak Zabarma, 65years, retired Civil Servant, Tudun Wada Gusau on 12- 09- 2019

⁶⁹*Ibid*. This association is responsible in communicating between government and private agencies in the payment of licenses, royalties and alike. It also requests and collect bank loans (up to ₦2billion) for the benefit of its members in Gusau metropolis.

20. Oral interview with Malam Hassan Maishanu, 64 years, former Dealer in Second Hand Clothes, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau. 6-1-2020
21. Oral interview with Malam AbdulWahid,67 years Second hand clothes dealer, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau on 07-01-2020.
22. Oral interview with Malam Muhammadu (Malam Mammani) Gusau, 89 years, Anguwar Sabon Fegi Gusau
23. Oral interview with Malam Abdullahi Mai Zuhdu,64, Small Scale Miner, at his Residence Unguwar Yarima on 12-01-2020
24. Oral interview with Abubakar Yahaya (Sadauki), 43years, a Gold buyer, at Shop No.5F, Polo Shopping Complex on 25-01- 2020
25. Oral interview with Ahaji Yau Noma, 56 years, Bureau De Change and Gold Dealer, at Polo Shopping Complex Gusau on 19-04-2020
26. Oral Interview with Alfari, 97 years, one of the Zabarma ward heads and presently the most elderly person among Zabarmawa at Gusau, at his residence Old Prison Area Tudun Wada Gusau,17-02-2020.
27. Oral interview with Alhaji Usamatu, 45years, Dealer in tourist Cars, Modomawa Motors, Opposite Tudun Wada Mosque on 23 -01- 2020
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