A History of the Migration and Emergence of an Enclave Settlement of Gobirawa in Kano since Nineteenth Century

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Abstract

The migration of different people from various places of the world and their settlement in Kano were closely associated with availability of fertile land for farming activities, and the existence of commercial activities in the town had greatly contributed in attracting many people to the town. Thus, a group of people from Gobir (one of the biggest pre-colonial Hausa state) was said to have migrated to Kano in the 19th century, in search for greener posture either in commercial or industrial sector and settled outside the town. By the end of the 20th century, this new founded settlement witnessed an increasing number of people who were mostly from Gobir and settled in the area for one type of business or the other. Therefore, the intrusion of people since the inception of colonial administration onwards, Kano continued to experience series of enlargement both in population and its physical structure; and since then wards continued to emerge. Similarly, as a result of the growing number of people in Gobirawa settlement, coupled with its large size that it was finally commissioned and recognized as an independent ward in 1992, and Muhammad Bango who was one of the migrants from Gobir was appointed as the first ward head of Gobirawa. Using both oral and written sources, the paper examines a history of the migration of Gobirawa and emergence of an enclave settlement in Kano state. The paper also argues that the emergence and settlement of Gobirawa people in Kano state have greatly contributed to the economic and political development of both settlement and Kano state at large.

Keywords: Migration, Emergence, enclave, settlement, gobirawa, Kano

Introduction

The paper examines the Gobirawa migration and emergence of an enclave settlement in Kano which later contributed to the economic and political development of Kano state.Kano being the strongest industrial and commercial centre since the 15th century central Sudanic history, attracted renowned Islamic scholars mainly Arab North African Berbers and the Wangarawa who introduced Islam into the area (Al-Hajj, 1988, 3-7).It is worthy of notice at this point that the people of Kano have had a long-term social interaction with the big business centers of the world. It was this development that later made it possible for Kano to witness the coming of many strangers purposely for businesses which subsequently resulted to the settlement of such people in different parts of Kano (Clack 1982, 18-20). It has also been established in the paper that the intrusion of Gobirawa people and other migrants mostly from Gobir since the inception of colonial administration onwards that Kano continued to experience series of enlargement both in population and its physical structure. It further examines the expansion and development of Gobirawa settlement before and after 1980. It also traces the political and economic structures of Gobirawa settlement in Kano since 19th century. The paper finally examines the proliferation of Gobirawa settlement as an independent ward in 1992.

Gobirawa Migration and Emergence of Enclave Settlement in Kano Metropolis

History has shown that there was certain group of people under the leadership of Malam Muhammad Aminu Bagobir who migrated from Gobir (one of the biggest pre-colonial Hausa state) and settled outside the Kano wall as directed by Kano emirate in the last quarter of the 19th century[1]. The migration and settlement of Gobirawa people in Kano were closely associated with availability of fertile land for farming activities, and existence of varieties commercial activities in the town. Similarly, towards the end of the 19th century, a large number of people from Gobir also migrated and settled at Gobirawa settlement in search for greener posture either in commercial or industrial sector and settled outside the town. By the end of the 20th century, this new founded settlement witnessed an increasing number of people who were mostly from Gobir came and settled in the area for one type of business or the other[2].

[1] Interview with Alhaji Isa Uba (a village head of Gobirawa Ward, 73, at his resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

[2] Interview with Alhaji Bala Muhammad Rinji (one of the early settlers of Gobirawa), Aged 81, at his Resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

However, the precise year for the formation of Gobirawa settlement in Kano is yet to be known; but in liberal statistical imaginative calculation, Gobirawa settlement was believed to have been founded in the 19th century by the people of Gobir in the last quarter of the 19th century. Similarly, at the early period of their arrival, they were said to have settled outside the town (city of Kano) and the place became their permanent settlement[3].

In addition, due to certain developments that were experienced, people from different directions began to settle in the area because of certain business opportunities and availability of fertile land for farming activities and this situation attracted many people to settle in the area. Henceforth, due to this development mentioned that people from neighboring areas started to call this area as Gobirawa. This therefore became the genesis of the name Gobirawa. Consequently, because of the fact that Gobirawa settlement was blessed with fertile land for agricultural produce and the farmers of the settlement produced their products throughout the year starting from wet season to dry season. The wet farming season farming stars from June to December. The major crops produced in the settlement include: maize, millet, groundnut, beans and so on. With this development, Gobirawa began to develop economically especially by the beginning of the 20th century[4]. As a result of this development, people from different geographical areas not only within Kano but also fromKatsina, Sokoto, Niger Republic and other near and far places came to settle in Gobirawa settlement.

As the area expanded, leather workers who were mostly from Gobir established their own separate settlement south to the west of Gobirawa settlement; this second settlement is called Gobirawar Dukawa i.e. area of the leather workers. However, both main Gobirawa settlement (first Gobirawa) and Gobirawar Dukawa were merged together to be considered as a single Gobirawa settlement. The historical origin of Gobirawar Dukawa could be traced back to the early occupation of people in the beginning of the first decade of the 20th century, because the main occupation of the Gobirawa people was *Dukanci* (leather working) and up to this time, it is one of one of their major occupations[5]. Thus, area was and is still called Gobirawar Dukawa. It is therefore important at this juncture to

[3] Interview with Alhaji Isa Uba (a village head of Gobirawa Ward, 73, at his resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

[4] Interview with Alhaji Ali Danladi (ward head of Kurnar Asabe), Age 70, at his Resident in Kurnar Asabe ward, on 20th June, 2018

[5] Interview with Malam Uba Abdullahi, Age 71, at his Resident in Gobirawar Dukawa, on 25thJune, 2018

note that Malam Yunusa was said to be the early and first settler of Gobirawar Dukawa, he migrated from Gobir and settled first in Bebeji for a while and later moved to Gobirawa and finally settled there, and he built his house containing three rooms. However, some houses were already established when Malam Yunusa constructed his own at Gobirawar Dukawa. Consequently, some of the early settlers of Gobirawa include: Malam Muhammadu Bango (first village head), Kura Baso, Malam Ibrahim Sanna, Malam Haladu Yunusa to mention just a few[6].

The Expansion and Development of Gobirawa Settlement before the 1980s

The expansion of Gobirawa settlement was indeed a lengthy and gradual development. The urban migration resulted from the over population of urban centres/areas (Kano city) which resulted to extension of residential areas by Kano state government. The 1962 plot allocation programme in Kurnar Asabe quarters, Gobirawa and 'Yammata coupled with plan of providing electrification of the area by NEPA and provision of pipe-born water in the eighties were some of the major factors that led to the development and expansion of Gobirawa settlement[7]. Meanwhile, the presence of electric power supply also contributed immensely towards the expansion and development of Gobirawa settlement; because this development attracted a large number of people to settle in the area especially in the second half of the 20th century. It was this situation that transformed mechanical power into energy. This is because before the presence of electricity to the settlement, people used engine gas for grinding and charcoal for ironing their clothes.However, with emergence of electricity in Gobirawa, the previous system was completely changed. Therefore, in the early part of the 1980, electrical energy was produced in Gobirawa in order to run machines and also to generate light at homes. Thus, electrical engines and electrical iron became available and people used them both for ironing and grinding[8].

Moreover, the establishment of government primary and secondary schools at adjacent of Gobirawa settlement was another factor which helped to the further expansion and development of Gobirawa settlement. In addition, many social

[6]Interview with Alhaji Isa Uba (a village head of Gobirawa Ward, 73, at his resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

[7]I.A. Tijjani, "The Establishment and Development of Kurnar Asabe Kano 1950-2000. M.A Dissertation, Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2014

[8]Interview with Alhaji Aminu Ado Bayero (former district head of Dala local government), Aged 57, at his Resident in Mandawari Sabon Titi, on 27th June,2018

amenities were put in place by Kano state government which transformed Gobirawa from rural to urban area. Similarly, some government health service centers were constructed and private clinics were also established. Therefore, by late 1980s, Gobirawa settlement witnessed a number of developments which made life easy. Thus, the presence of these social amenities had greatly contributed to the expansion and development of the Gobirawa settlement[9].

The Further Expansion of Gobirawa Settlement from 1980-1999

Gobirawa settlement witnessed the second phase of its expansion and development in 1980s. This was because the chaotic episode of Maitatsine in the metropolitan city of Kano led to the migration of many people to Gobirawa settlement. As a result of this reason, the migration of these people brought abought the congestion of Gobirawa settlement. This was certainly because most of the farms that were previously cultivated for food crops were subsequently transformed into houses[10].

One of the most important factors responsible for the development of Gobirawa settlement is intricately interwoven in the growth of Kano's population from the beginning of the 19th century and the turn of the 20th century which had been unparalleled in its history[11]. The influx of migrants caused not only the congestion of the old city or *Birnin* Kano but its expansion to an unprecedented level. Consequently, in 1950s, the late emir of Kano, Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero declared the old city as congested and in 1968 Alhaji Ado Bayero did so[12]. The implication of this declaration was that no new allocation could be made inside the city, and also since the extra thousands that arrived Kano from different destinations every year must be housed, the need for land to accommodate them arose. This brought about the expansion of Kano to the fringe areas immediately adjoining the built up part of the city.[13]

The Gobirawa area provided opportunity for the teeming masses, not just because of its proximity to the city

[9]Interview with Alhaji Aminu Ado Bayero (former district head of Dala local government), Aged 57, at his Resident in Mandawari……on 27th June, 2018

[10]Interview with Alhaji Nuhu Muhammad, Aged 71, at his Resident in Gobirawa, on 28th June, 2018

[11]Alan, Frishman, "The Spatial Growth and Residential Location Pattern of Kano" PhD thesis, North-western University, 1977

[12]B.A.W, Travallion, (1963) *Metropolitan Kano, Report on the Twenty Years of Development Plan 1963-1983*, London, p. 1-4

[13]B.A.W, Travallion, (1963) *Metropolitan Kano, Report on the Twenty Years of Development Plan*.....p.4

center or availability of cheap and affordable plots but because the area was blessed with comfortable and healthful climate to accommodate future growth, minimum topographic restrictions and buildable soil that do not make the cost of construction so high. These factors helped to attract many people into the area, especially in 1966, when the Native Authority (NA) made its plan to extend Kano metropolitan to the areas along Katsina road and some parts of Gobirawa that consisted of 144 plots, of approximately 200 by 50 feet were sold to interesting people for establishing houses. By 1968 the plots had been allocated and construction had begun[14]. This development brought about the further expansion of Gobirawa settlement.

Another important development that enhanced the growth of Gobirawa settlement was the construction of Bukavu barracks in 1963/64, following the decision of the government to station soldiers in the area[15]. The barracks consist of offices, stores, workshops and other minor buildings. It also consisted of bungalows which were meant to accommodate senior officers. It is important to note that the building of the Aerodrome and a military barrack in this area set in motion the development for the emergence of a heterogeneous society with cosmopolitan outlook. The settlement for the first time witnessed the influx of migrants from different parts of the country. Some of the airport workers and ex-soldiers bought plots, built them up and moved there after their retirement. This greatly led to the increase in population and also set the foundation of the beginning of new form of socio-economic interaction and relationship. This is because people who were different in socio-cultural background with inhabitants came and settled in the area.

Another important factor which brought about the further development and expansion of Gobirawa settlement was the existence of Malam Aminu Kano International Airport. The government under late Alhaji Muhammad Abubakar Rimi embarked on land acquisition between 1979/1980 for the purpose of airport expansion. Therefore, farmlands towards Kwachiri and Kurna were assessed and compensation paid on economic trees and other installations. Thus, the airport was expanded very close to Gobirawa settlement and this

[14] Tijjani, I. A (2014), 'The Establishment and Development of Kurnar Asabe, Kano 1950-2000'. M.A Dissertation, Department of History: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. P. 86

[15] Interview with Alhaji Idi Sulaiman (retired military officer), 68 years, at his resident in Kurnar Asabe Babban Layi, on 12th September, 2015

development attracted many people to the area as their new settlement[16].

The coming of people from southern part of the country to Gobirawa settlement was revolutionary in its socio-economic development. Within a very short period of their arrival, they were able to make their impact felt in both the social and commercial life of the settlement. This was largely achieved as a result of the indigenes nonchalant attitude towards certain commercial enterprises. With time, the Igbo soon exerted their dominance in a number of commercial enterprises; such as electronics, spare parts sales, motor and machine repairs, televisions and videos etc; while the Yoruba were the dominant in most of the modern technical and services industries: printing, transport and photograph[17].

The civilian government (1999-203) under Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso on its effort to acquire land on the north-western part of the Malam Aminu Kano International Airport i.e. Jaba and Gobirawa areas also led to the further development of the settlement. This was due to the demand by the airport authority to the state government for land in order to expand the airport; the Kano state government directed the state Ministry of Land and Physical Planning to take census of all the land in the identified areas taking into consideration the economic trees and other installations in the area with intention of paying proper compensation to the owners. The result of this was that many of those land owners particularly those from Jaba relocated to Gobirawa settlement. This situation brought about the further development and expansion of Gobirawa settlement[18].

There was also community development which contributed for the complete transformation of Gobirawa settlement. Various communities in the area, having known the importance of self-help organization had been making tremendous impacts on the general welfare of the people in the area through the execution of development projects. For example, through this community development, many roads were reconstructed and new ones were created. For instance, road from 'Yanganda to Gobirawar Dukawa, Shago Tara to 'Yankifi, from Naira da Kobo to Kurna Babban Layi were all reconstructed in the late 20th century. In addition, through the

[16] Farida, B. (2014), "The Establishment and Development of Malam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA)", B.A Dissertation, Department of History: Bayero University, Kano. P.18

[17] Tijjani, I. A (2014), The Establishment and Development of Kurnar Asabe, Kano 1950-2000. M.A Dissertation, Department of History: Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. P. 89

[18]Interview with Alhaji Atiku Aliyu (Chairman Airline Operators of Nigeria, Malam Aminu Kano International Airport Chapter) 53 years, on 19th September, 2015

efforts of various communities, electric power supply was connected to the rest of the areas that were hitherto not connected with electric power and transformers were also provided to such areas. For example, Gobirawar Dukawa, and Naira da Kobo were provided with new transformers.

The Political and Economic Structures of Gobirawa Settlement since 19th Century

One of the major objectives of the British military activities in West Africa was to conquer any region they wanted. Thus, it was through this process that British conquered Kano in 1903, and later the whole Sokoto Caliphate was brought under British protectorate[19]. By 1910, British established and consolidated their rule in the entire Sokoto Caliphate and since then Kano was administered by the British colonial administration[20]. This therefore resulted to the adoption of an indirect rule system and the indigenous people of Kano were administered through their local traditional institutions. However, even before the advent of British colonialists, Kano had its own traditional system of government, but the increasing affairs of Kano city made it necessary to divide Kano into four sections directly responsible to Galadima which include many wards. The four sections are: Wakilin Kudu (representative of Kano south), Wakilin Gabas (representative of the eastern Kano), Wakilin Yamma (representative of the western Kano) and Wakilin Arewa (representative of the northern Kano; but up to this time Gobirawa settlement was just a village. But as a result of the creation of more local governments due to increasing number of socio-economic and political activities in Kano that later Gobirawa became part of the urban centers, and since from that time onwards, Gobirawa continued to be ruled through traditional institutions[21].

Traditionally, Gobirawa settlement had one village head and ward heads even before it became a ward and they were all answerable to the District head. The proliferation of Gobirawa as an independent ward in in 1992 made the number of the ward heads to increase. Presently, Gobirawa has eight ward heads and they are all answerable to the village head, and the village head is responsible and answerable to the District head. Administratively, Gobirawa today as a ward is under the

[19]C.N. Uba, Government Administration in Kano Emirate 1900-1930, Nsukka University Press, P. 82

[20] C.N. Uba, Government Administration in Kano Emirate 1900-1930, Nsukka University Press, P. 82

[21]Interview with Alhaji Aminu Ado Bayero (former district head of Dala local government), Aged 57, at his Resident in Mandawari (Now the emir of Kano state) ……on 27th June, 2018

supervision of an elected councilor and even then, the traditional institution played an important role in administering the area. Hence, up to today, such traditional institutions are still in existence[22].

In term of economic development of Gobirawa settlement, it was found out by the researchers that the major and early economic activities of Gobirawa people were farming. They fully engaged in farming activities due to the availability of fertile land in the area. They were therefore depended heavily on agriculture for their food crops. They cultivated different types of food crops like maize sorghum, millet, groundnuts, cotton and so on. As a result of the fertility of the area, people of Gobirawa were able to farm enough food for their consumption. This situation had greatly helped in boosting the economic development of Gobirawa settlement. In addition, majority of the people of Gobirawa settlement were wet season farmers, although few of them practiced dry season farming. It is significant at this point to make it clear that both of the farming activities in the rainy and dry seasons had contributed immensely towards the economic development of the area.

The above development brought about the beginning of trading activities in a form of trade by barter due to the absence of money in that period. For example, people who wanted to have maize, they normally gave millet or groundnut to those who desired such things for exchange. It was through this process that trade was usually conducted during the early period of Gobirawa settlement. Consequently, most people who brought their goods to the local market were normally exchanged with other items of trade. These trading activities made it easy for the neighboring areas like Kwachiri, Kofar Ruwa, Rijiyar Lemo and Ungogo to bring products with aim of exchanging goods they wanted[23].

However, the coming of colonialists opened a new chapter in the economic history of Gobirawa settlement. This is because, the whole economic activities of Gobirawa was changed from that of early period. During colonial rule, cash crops were forced to be made available to the colonialists purposely for their home industries[24].This situation in general brought abought a complete transformation in the economic activities of Gobirawa settlement. There was also the

[22]Interview with Alhaji Isa Uba (a village head of Gobirawa Ward, 73, at his resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

[23]Interview with Alhaji Isa Uba (a village head of Gobirawa Ward, 73, at his resident in Gobirawa, on 19th June, 2018

[24]M.A Liman, Perspectives on Kano British Relations, (eds) by M.O Habolu, Gidan Makama Press, 2003

introduction of colonial currency. The introduction of money meant that the exchange of goods between various people had been stopped. The introduction of money also meant that everybody had to pay tax in cash. Consequently, the production of cash crops by the people of Gobirawa became constant at a time and in turn affected their form of food crop, because the colonialists wanted these cash crops on time and this situation made it very difficult for the people of Gobirawa to produce adequate food crops. They produced cash crops in order for them to pay taxes. This therefore affected the majority of the people of Gobirawa settlement in a negative way[25].

By 1960, the total system of trade declined and the nature of the economic activities in Gobirawa settlement also changed. Because modern markets different from those of the early time were founded. Therefore, the lives of the people in the settlement were economically affected due to the nature of the complete changes in their economic activities during the colonial period. Similarly, this transformation attracted a large number of people to Gobirawa settlement and many of such migrants became farmers and businessmen. This is because most of those who came and settled in Gobirawa engaged fully in trading activities. The result of all this was that more workshops and new markets were established in Gobirawa which was due to the changing nature of the economic activities, and the development of trade[26].

The Emergence of Gobirawa Settlement as an Independent Ward in 1992

With attainment of Nigerian independence on 1st October, 1960, there were many migrants who came to Kano in search for greener posture either in commercial or industrial development. This situation gave rise for the need to plan for the entire settlements. Thus, a master planwas drawn called a Travallion plan to direct the physical development of Kano[27]. For this to be achieved, there must be a requirement for the expansion and incorporation of the newly villages into the metropolitan areas of Kano. Consequently, the creation of states in 1967, and oil boom in 1970 made it easy for the commercial importance of Kano state to increase. The government embarked on transformation of its capital city with development projects. However, with formation of Housing Estates and introduction of Urban Development Board in 1984

[25]M.A Liman, Perspectives on Kano British Relations, (eds) by M.O Habolu, Gidan Makama Press, 2003

[26]Aliens, B, An Economic History of Nigeria. London: George Allen and Unwin, P.19, 1929

[27]B.A W Travallion, Metropolitan Kano Report on the Twenty Years of Development Plan 1963-1983, London, P.1,1963

which was later transformed into Kano State Environmental Planning and Protection Agency (KASSEPPA), the Kano state government through these agencies initiated and executed housing projects such as Gwammaja Housing Estate and Kundila Housing Estate. This ushered the development of new settlements in many areas of metropolitan Kano[28]. Therefore, government projects in different areas stimulated the growth of many other residential developments which was a result of migrants' illegal buildings and sub-division of farm lands to residential plots and this situation led to the emergence of many areas and wards such as Rijiyar Lemo, Bachirawa, Gobirawa and so on.

Therefore, the intrusion of people to Kano in particular and Gobirawa settlement in general since the inception of colonial administration onwards, Kano continued to experience series of developments both in population and its physical structure; a situation which resulted to the commissioning of many settlements as wards by the Kano state government under the administration of Executive Governor Alhaji Kabiru Ibrahim in 1992 and Gobirawa settlement was equally not an exception. Today, Gobirawa Ward is situated somewhere along Katsina Road in present day Dala Local Government Area of Kano State. It is located at the Northwestern extreme part of Kano closed settled zone. Gobirawa ward is about two kilometres away from Kofar Ruwa to the north-west Ungogo sharing boundary to the east Kwachiri ward, to west Ungogo and to the north Tudun Fulani[29].

Conclusively, the paper argues that the migration and emergence of Gobirawa settlement as well as the coming of different people to this settlement which is today under Dala Local Government Area of Kano state have greatly contributed the economic and political development of Kano. For example, for any Kano state election to take place (Gubernatorial or Senatorial), the contester must win the election of Gobirawa ward because of the large population of the ward. In fact, it is one of the largest wards in Kano state. Therefore, the contribution of Gobirawa ward in the field of politics of Kano state cannot be quantified.

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