

AN OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC HISTORY OF GUMEL EMIRATE 1960 TO 2020 A.D.

BY

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Gumel Emirate has played a vital role in the economy of Jigawa State for decades. It has been a leading area in cattle production and trade, as well as food crop production since the emergence of the cattle trade in Maigatari in 1929. Despite the lack of attention given to the economic history of Gumel in Jigawa State, the Emirate has contributed significantly to the economic, social, and political development of Northern Nigeria, and Nigeria in general, through its various economic activities, which include agriculture, trade, and manufacturing. This paper provides an overview of economic activities in Gumel Emirate from 1960 to 2020. It explores the immense benefits that the people of Gumel have derived from agriculture and cattle production compared to other emirates in Jigawa State. The study delves into the economic activities, including agriculture, trade, and manufacturing, and also examines the impact of government policies and initiatives on these industries. The study also highlights the challenges faced by the Northeast region's economy, such as fluctuating global markets, natural disasters, and political instability, insecurity is missing. The research was conducted using primary and secondary sources, including archival records, newspaper articles, and related documents. The findings indicate that economic activities in Gumel Emirate have had a significant impact on the economic, social, and political development of Northern Nigeria and the country as a whole. The study concludes that Gumel Emirate has a rich history that deserves more attention, and its economic activities have played a key role in the development of Nigeria over the years.

Introduction

Gumel Emirate is one of the five emirates in Jigawa State. The early settlers in the Emirate comprised mostly Hausa, Daurawa, Fulani, Bare-Bari, and Mungawa. The Hausas, who were originally hunters, were of Daura origin and were later joined by farmers from Kano. The Fulani herdsmen were among the early settlers in the area.¹ They are found spread across the savannah belt of Africa south of the Sahara, possibly from the Niger Republic. The Barebari and Mungawa peoples are of Kanuri stock, who migrated from the northwest of Bornu in the first half of the 18th century and settled in some places over some time before they finally settled and founded Gumel in 1837.² Gumel is located in the great Kano land now Jigawa State, but it was part of the Bornu Empire, even before the coming of Usman Danfodio Jihad. It remained a part of Bornu after the jihad until Emir Ahmadu was dethroned by the British colonial power in the year 1903. Thereafter, the Emirate was incorporated into Kano province until 1991 when it was made a part of the newly created Jigawa State. The Mangawa were the founders of the ruling dynasty that existed from the 1750s A.D to the present (2020).³ There are no detailed studies on the reasons and nature of economic trade in the Gumel Emirate, because most studies focused on the administrative

¹ JARDA," Jigawa State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority" Agriculture Policy, Jigawa State Nigeria, 2016, p.10.

² Waziri, Dalha, "A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate," PhD Thesis, BUK, 1983, p.31.

³ Waziri, Dalha. "A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate,"

aspects of the Emirate. This gap in Nigerian economic history justifies the interest of this study. Waziri⁴ studied the pre-colonial political history of Gumel and how it was transformed after the imposition of British rule in 1939. The study examines the re-introduction of the pre-colonial administrative machinery and Native Authority, (N.A), the district head and village head system, and a colonial tax system. Waziri provides a detailed background and stimulating discussion of how the development of both political and economic structure provided invaluable insight into the history of Gumel Emirate before the independence of Nigeria.

Abdullahi,⁵ analyzed the cross-border trade between Nigeria and Niger Republic and highlighted the species of cattle traded, their sources of supply as well as destination, and the actors involved in the trade. His work is restricted to the cattle trade, neglecting other livestock like sheep, goats, camel, and horses which are equally important. The work is relevant because it provides valuable information on cattle trade as a component of the cattle industry in the study area.

Umar,⁶ in his "Comparative Analysis in Inter-boundary Trade between Maigatari and Dungas Communities Across Nigeria and Niger borders", asserts that traders from southern Niger and Northern Nigeria understand each other perfectly as they belong to Hausa/ Fulani in the western and central border and Kanuri in the eastern part of the border, and are often related by family, religious and language links. The long diplomatic and cordial relationship between the communities living along the boundary region of the Niger Republic and Nigeria has given room for the potential of inter-boundary trade and improved livelihood and security between the two countries and as a result, promotes the production of crops and livestock. However, the work has not done much to explain the livestock production system, but it is relevant to the study as an important aspect of the cattle industry in Gumel as Maigatari is part of Gumel Emirate.

This paper intends to examine aspects of the economic history of the Gumel Emirate after independence from 1960-2020. The period 1960 marks a significant landmark in the economic history of Gumel when a road network was constructed to link Gumel Emirate with Kano. During the year, 1960, people from Gumel seized the opportunity to embark on trade. The cattle traders that used Kano as the Centre for Trade now thus saw the potentiality of Gumel Emirate as an entry port for traders to other parts of Nigeria due to the present international market at Maigatari Local Government. However, the study terminates in the period 2020 because it was the year when the Jigawa State government constructed an eastern bypass road that links Yobe, and Hadieja Emirate to Gumel Emirate to boost the cattle industry. This study utilises historical narrative to analyse data obtained from secondary and primary sources, including published materials, tertiary institutions' projects, seminar papers, and other works of literature on the economic history of Gumel Emirate, Jigawa State. Oral sources were used to fill gaps in the economic history of Gumel. The survey phase consists of interviews, reviews, and conversations with the traders, and merchants in Gumel, Maigatari, Gagarawa and Tankar-kar who know about the economic history of Gumel Emirate. The issues to be addressed were more or less general since the main goal was to make a historical overview and knowledge of the Gumel economic activities. The study is qualitative and employed snowball sampling in the collection of data. The data obtained was examined, analysed, corroborated, and interpreted for a better understanding of the economic history of Gumel Emirate, 1960-2020.

The Study Area

Gumel Emirate, presently located in the northeastern part of Jigawa State, lies on latitude 12.38N and Longitude of 7.2E and at approximately 1,200 feet, and 1,370m above sea level.⁷ The total land area is approximately 1,310 square miles or 3,400 square kilometers. It is bordered by Niger Republic in the north, Hadejia Emirate in the East, Machina in the northeast, and Ringim Emirate in the southwest. It comprises four LGAs, namely: Gumel with a total population of 189,900, Gagarawa 141,300, Maigatari 304,500, and Sule Tankarkar 231,800, based on

⁴ Waziri, Dalha. "A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate,"

⁵ B. Abdullahi, "Analysis of Cross Border Trade Between Nigeria and Niger," PhD Thesis, Department of Economics, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, University, Bauchi, 2008.

⁶ A. Umar, "Comparative Analysis in Inter-Boundary Trade Between Maiagatari and Dingas Community Across Nigeria-Niger Border," M.A Dissertation, Department of Geography, Bayero University, Kano, 2008.

⁷ National Population Commission, NPC, Population Census, 2006.

the 2006 population census. The total population of the Gumel Emirate based on the 2006 estimated population census stood at 867,500 thousand.⁸

The Emirate is located at the northern end of Sudan's savannah. It is a plain land covered mostly with sandy soil dotted with some parchment of water-logged areas where clay soil is found. In the southern parts of the Emirate, loamy soil is found. Physical features like Rivers and mountains are absent in the area.⁹ This eased the movements of the peoples, unlike in the creeks and the forest area of the south. The Emirate has no river and nearly all agricultural operations, apart from the application of manure and clearing of bush farms, are carried out during the short rainy season and within a few weeks, when guinea corn, millet, and cowpeas are harvested.

The main crops grown by the Emirate farmers are millet, guinea corn of different varieties, (yellow, red, and white), beans, sesame, groundnuts, Bambara nut, and watermelons which were cultivated both for consumption and for sale.¹⁰ Most of the grains including groundnuts were stored unthreshed in bundles (dame). Mixed cropping is mostly practiced with a few farmers practicing mono cropping. The area is favorable for keeping animals such as sheep, goats, cattle, horses, donkeys, and camels. In those days, only a few farmers owned cattle and as such, it proved difficult to estimate the numbers.¹¹

The landscape and location of the study area allow waves of introduction of cattle from Niger and the Sahel region. The economic benefits that accrue to the Northwest zone of Nigeria are enormous; wealth is drawn from the cattle economy, migrant movement, animal, medicinal benefit, and method of production to name just a few. Many will be shown in the latter part of the research.

Economic Activities of Gumel Emirate

Before discussing the aspects of Gumel Emirate economy, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the economy to which the cattle trade itself is an integral part. The Economy can be seen from four broad sectoral perspectives, namely; agriculture, industry, crafts, and trade. These sectors must be seen as mutually reciprocal and reinforcing. The health of any of the sectors impacted the others. There was no strict division between the sectors. For instance, some farmers engaged in crop as well as cattle production and trade.

Agriculture

Agriculture is an important sector of the Nigerian economy including the Gumel Emirate economy. Njoku¹² describes agriculture as by far the most pervasive of the economic pursuits of the Nigerian people in the 19th century as it certainly had been even earlier and still is today. It embraced some types of production; crop production (food crop and non-food crops), animal rearing and hunting, fishing and gathering. These are discussed under the rubric of agriculture because they were a part and parcel of the agricultural economy. Food production was easily the dominant aspect of the agricultural economy. The sector was the largest employer of labor as most household was engaged in it either full-time or at least on a part-time basis.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the Gumel Emirate economy with over 70% of the population engaged in it.¹³ these include farming, food processing, and livestock production. The greater population of Gumel emirate is engaged in agricultural activities to earn a living. This is not a new phenomenon, from the history of the people; agriculture

⁸ JARDA. Jigawa State Agriculture and Rural Development Authority, Agriculture Policy, jigawa state Nigeria. 2016.

⁹ Waziri, Dalha. "A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate,"

¹⁰ P. Hill, *Rural Home: A Village and A setting*, (London, Cambridge University Press, 1972), p.37.

¹¹Waziri, Dalha. "A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate,"

¹² O. N. Njoku, "Economic History of Nigeria in the 19th and 20th century", (Enugu: Magnet Enterprises, 2001), p.19.

¹³ JARDA," Jigawa State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority" Agriculture Policy, Jigawa State Nigeria, 2016, p.10.

had been the principal occupation of the people. There was no family in pre-colonial times that was not engrossed in food crop production as well as the production of industrial crops such as cotton and groundnut.

In 1970, the Gumel Emirate, farm laboring system known as (*Kwadago* and laborers as (*yan kwadago*), was a relatively unimportant system of contract labor (*nomam jinga*). The laborer, who provided the tools was paid a standard payment, which varies somewhat seasonally for, some 5-6 hours of work during the morning, and is served free food like (*fura*) while at work. The payment for working some 2-3 hours in the evening or afternoon is always half the morning. Normally in the morning, young men who worked in the farm give a large part of their morning earnings to the fathers, but retained their evening earnings. The owner of the farm usually worked alongside his laborers, as do his sons. Labourers were mainly employed in weeding, ploughing, ridging, grain harvesting, sowing, digging, bush clearing by use of the hoe- a task which was accomplished very quickly on the sandy soil of Gumel. Numerous other men and youths worked occasionally as laborer, many of them in the evening only. The laborer system (strugglers) became an effective labor force of richer farmers as a group, without leading to a corresponding reduction in the number of men-days worked on the farms of the poor farmers. In the 1970s; also, there was a standard wage that was paid as a matter of course. Ten naira (N10) were paid with (*fura*) for laborer in the morning and five naira (₦5) for laborer in the evening. This price fixing in reality is to bring order into the economic system. However, there was no system by which it was established and certainly, there was no organized discussion among farmers or laborers.

Umar, opined that the first point to note in this, is that Gumel is not an island; some Gumel men seek work elsewhere, notably with farmers living in Hadejia and Ringim Emirates who offer high rates. Gumel wage rates were therefore directly related to those prevailing in a somewhat wide area. The wage rate, which becomes established without discussion, is effectively determined by the small number of richer farmers who account for the bulk of the demand for labour. These farmers maintained a level of wage adequate to ensure sufficient supplies of high-quality labour.¹³

In 1980, much of the farm labour in Gumel emirate was casual labour. In this system, a laborer was hired to work either from 6 am to 12 pm or from 4 pm to 6 pm. The morning laborer was paid N 800 and, in the afternoon, or evening labour paid ₦ 400. Some laborers prefer to be paid bulk sum of money when they finish their jobs. In this case; the amount agreed depends on the size of the farm and the workload. Another reason as to why wage labor of 1980 was less than that of 1970s, is that by 1980s, many farmers practice mix-cropping while by 1970s the production was meant for the need of the family, while the labor wage rate is less. When the crops are harvested, some of them are stored while the surplus is taken to market for sale⁴¹³ This system forms the basis of income for many people in the emirate. The farmers produce crops that the rural and urban population consume. They are also responsible for most of its long-term storage. Their traditional receptacle (see sailor) is more serviceable than any other storage methods generally available in the Emirate. Most granaries are stored in silos outside the house compounds because their setting in the towns (Gari) causes much congestion. Grains are stored unthreshed in bundles.¹⁴

Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry, a method of producing or rearing domestic animals, has been practiced in all parts of Gumel Emirate since time immemorial. One of the pillars on which the rural economy has been built for millennia is livestock, made up mostly of cattle, goats, sheep, donkeys, and poultry. The Fulani, during their migration, introduced two breeds of cattle in the area; the white Fulani, and the red Mbororo. According to Murtala Bello,¹⁴ Gumel peoples were not traditionally large livestock owners, but rather crop producers.

¹³. Yakubu Adamu, "Cattle Trade and the Development of Maigatari Economy in Jigawa State". M. A Dissertation, Department of History and International Studies. University of Nigeria Nsukka, 2014. pp-35-36.

¹⁴ B, Murtala, Oral Interview, 70 years, Herdsmen, Madana. Gagarawa LGA, Jigawa State.14/07/2019.

The cattle rearing system that prevailed in Jigawa State and Gumel emirate was transhumance and therefore semi-intensive. In general, each herd owner had dry and wet season grazing land. There were a few places where the fortune grazers were spared the necessity of moving within the year. In other words, transhumance was integral to the management of cattle in the area. The transhuman is usually vertical, that is, cattle moved to the Hadejia and Ringim emirates, where pasture and water were available in the dry season. Gumel Emirate has no green pasture in the dry season which made Fulani move to the *Fadama* area of wet environment. However, the Mbororo were nomadic as their reaction to any danger was to move to a new environment. The movement could also aim to increase the cattle population on the extensive grazing land.¹⁵ Cattle in the wet season were grazed at Maigatari, Sule Tankar-kar, and Gagarawa local government areas in Gumel Emirate.

During the dry season, the Fulani were concentrated along the Hadejia River valley and in some parts of the Ringim emirates because of the availability of water and pasture. Cattle were individually owned and managed by families. Each herd was under the charge of a cowboy. One cowboy took charge of 50 to 100 herds of cattle. Every morning, he got his cow out of the corn farms. The cattle herder (*Gianako*) worked in shifts, that is, night and day shifts and mostly were paid minimum rates either in cash or in kind.

In the Emirate, the only grazing land in the farming season was in the bush. As the human population increased and the value of crops increased, there was more demand for farmland. If the cattle route “burtalis” were marginal land, then artificial fertilizer would be used by the farmer to grow crops that might not otherwise be worthwhile. An area that formerly supported twenty cattle in 1960, could support eighty in 1980, as the farms eroded on to over grazing, when the farmer saw fewer cattle, he unjustly assumed he could bite into even more grazing land and so a vicious circle is set up. The government measures to demarcate permanent grazing areas were neither popular nor did it serve to divert some of the herds to the untouched grazing areas which the conservative and suspicious Fulani had never used. For these reasons, Wilson, Assistance Chief Veterinary Officer, under the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Health, Veterinary Division, Kano, asserted that, the Agricultural Department has done some excellent work in improving wasteland and pasture. But this is very expensive.¹⁶ ...We hope to do something ourselves on the Fulani amenities and the work of Mr. Larson for the stall feeding will be considered.¹⁷

The Agricultural Department had taken steps to fence off certain pasture areas which would act as an alleviation. This Division, in addition to the activities of the tsetse fly has undertaken a program of providing amenities to grazers such as water supplies especially to the Fulani with social amenities to make the areas attractive to cattle owners and encourage settlement in such areas where those facilities were lacking.¹⁸ In the meantime, livestock diseases, and parasites were the problems in Gumel emirate, the most common of which are presented in Table 1.

Table I: Animals, Diseases, and Parasites Common in the Gumel Emirate.

LIVESTOCK	DISEASE	PARASITE
CATTLE	Biorne Pleuro-Pneumonia, Streptothricosis, Anthrax, Blackquater, Rinderpest.	Roundworm, Threadworms, Hookworms, Ticks
GOAT	Pleuro-Pneumonia, Heartwater, Contagious eethyma.	-
SHEEP	Foot rot, Heartwater, Black tongue, Contagious eethyma.	

¹⁵ A. Ngali.” Cattle Industry in the North-West Province of Cameroon” Department of History and International Studies, PhD Dissertation, University Nigeria Nsukka, 2016, pp31-32.

¹⁶ Waziri, Dalha A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate, M.A Dissertation, Department of History, Bayero University Kano, 1983, p127.

¹⁷ . Dalha. Waziri, Dalha. A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate,

¹⁸ National Archive Kano,

POUTRY	Coccidiosis, Fowl cholera, Fowl typhoid, Newcastle diseases.	-
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Source: Modified from Henry Berinyuy Biome, cited in A. Nglin Cattle Industry in the North-West Province in Cameroun.

During the colonial period, livestock health experienced and provided a notable transformation. The government provided veterinary facilities to the cattle farmers. The animals were vaccinated at a certain period to prevent disease attacks, for trade, and for better beef and milk production. To boost cattle production, these were made free for good quality skins for industrial use in Europe. By 1970, investigations into the diseases affecting cattle were carried out and the veterinary service coupled with natural conditions prevailed in the Emirate. The result is a low occurrence of diseases. The government made a policy to make a routine vaccine every year. The table below presents the vaccines purchased for use on cattle in 1970.¹⁹

Table 2: Quantities of Vaccines Purchased for Use on Cattle in 1970

Vaccine	Doses	Price in Pounds
Black quarter	120,000	500: -: -d
Blockquote	130,000	750: -: -
Black quarter	2000	8: 6: 8
Hemorrhagic septicemias	16, 000	68: 16: -
TOTAL	268,500	1327: 2: 8d

Source: NAB.QG/1950/5, File No.12, Veterinary Report and General Correspondence, 1970, p.61.

In this system, animal health is one of the most important factors in farming, especially if one is keeping livestock. However, that aspect is often neglected. The vaccination of cattle is used to protect them from a wide range of diseases that affect production, fertility, and economic losses to the farmers. It is also efficient in preventing the transmission and spread of contagious animal diseases from animal to people and from animal to animal which reduces mortality in farms and contributes to improving animal welfare. Therefore, large numbers of herds were owned by individuals, who considered their cattle a source of milk (a major item in their diets), social prestige as well as sources of cash. The herders had a base site where they settled during the wet season; and even grew crops; The cattle moved slowly down with different families and camped quite close together because there was plenty of grass for their cattle. In these aspects, one of the families' young boys of about 14-15 years was responsible for leading his father's herd of cattle to "ube", where they spent the night.

Very early in the morning, the cattle were taken away from the cultivated fields into the bush, where they found plenty of grass. The *guanacos* watched all the cattle as they grazed. There were pools of water where the cattle could drink. When the rain had stopped, preferably in October, the family decided to begin their movement with their calabashes, pots, and mats loaded onto a special bull, camping here and there for a few days for the cattle to graze, until they came to the marshland of river in Hadejia emirate for the availability of fodder and water especially in the dry season.

Cattle production remains a vital component of the farming system in Gumel emirate. The use of cow discharges to generate organic manure greatly improved the productivity of farmers with special regard to millet, guinea corn, beans, and groundnut production which are taken to markets for sale. The economy of the emirate between 1965 and 1975 was based on the "*Jangali*" tax collected from livestock owners by the colonial government for project execution and payment of salaries of Native Administration Officers.²⁰

It is important to note that, in Gumel emirate taxation was the major source of revenue for the Gumel Native Authority, Thus, the sub-division of the districts into village units, the appointment of salaried village heads and their staff, and the building of rest houses are all meant for effective tax collection. Similarly, the colonial

¹⁹ A. Nglim. "Cattle industry in the North-West Province of Cameroon", PhD Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, University of Nigeria Nsukka, p33.

²⁰ NAK Document, in Dalha. Waziri, Ministry of Animal Health, Forestry and Veterinary Division Kano 1961.

government constructed a road and a railway line through Gagarawa, in the Jarma District in 1960, providing outlets for groundnuts, hide, and skin obtained from Gumel. Updating of tax register was an annual activity that both the villages and the district heads had to effectively supervise to minimize problems of erosion of tax payment by taxpayers. In 1950, the District Officer of the Northern Division, Mr, Backhouse, explained that the sedentary attitude of the immigrants made tax census easier and faster than it used to be. According to Backhouse, for the majority of the Fulani immigrants;²¹

...The limit of immigrant is the annual removal of their huts from the middle to the edge of their farm, so that, the manure of their cattle, which is most abundant near their previous years' holding, can be utilized to the fullest extent²²

Another effect of groundnut production and exports is to accelerate the development of an annex settlement of Gagarawa on the railway called Gagarawa (Tasha), which became one of the four LGAs that constituted Gumel Emirate. This settlement served as a concentration Centre from where groundnut, hides and skin were exported by rail to Kano. Lorries were also used to convey the export goods by road from Gumel via Danladi, Gabasawa to Kano, and from Gumel via Sule Tan kar-kar and back to Babura to Kano. The above portrayed the development of groundnut production and trade and by implication effective tax collection. According to Mohammed Idris,²³ a knowledgeable elder, this led to the emergence of towns and villages like Maigatari, Sule Tankar-kar, Gagarawa. Danzomo, Danladi, and Madaka that became famous as centers of groundnut trade. This can be understood from the facts that, all these trading centers were linked with motorable roads, Gagarawa is on the rail line that linked Kano to Nguru in Yobe State.

It should be stated that the British established Rest Houses at important places such as Maikilili, Galadi, and Danladi towns to provide accommodation for political officers who revised tax assessment and collection done by the village Heads. The Rest Houses were used by the political officers during tax supervision. Guest Houses were established in the villages as accommodation for District Heads and their staff during tax supervision. Sarkin Fawa,²⁴ asserted that, cattle enterprises appear be a lucrative and significant aspect on the Gumel emirate economy. The production of cattle could not be efficient, because its production was left in the hands of ordinary individuals. Hides and skins of cattle were usually collected during meat inspection from slaughter. It was based on this; that the government built a frame for hide and skin drying in villages and towns in the emirate. In sum, cattle were a vital component of the economy. It was however, beset by a myriad of problems, the worst of which were farmers/ herder's conflicts from about 1995, The Fulani in Nigeria increased in numbers considerably, and they constituted a grave problem of farmers/herder's conflict from different dimensions. Uncontrolled cattle encroach into farms. This led to conflict between headers and people who owned such farms. On the other hand, it is logical for a farmer to claim damage with evidence. In some instances, the herders find it difficult to control the cattle, especially at night, cattle encroach on the farm easily in the night.

It is an indubitable fact that the government had a vested interest in cattle rearing because this brought considerable revenue, in the form of herd tax from the Fulani. Table 3 shows the revenue generated by Jangali in Gumel emirate from 1960-1980.

Table 3: Summary of Revenue and Expenditure for the Districts Councils of Gumel Emirate 1960-80.

District	Approved Revenue ₦114161	Approved Expenditure ₦1961-1962	Reserved	Special Revenue if any
Danzomo	1437.18.5	1373.11.0	64.75	-

²¹ . Waziri, Dalha. A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate, p-112.

²² . Waziri, Dalha A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate, p-117.

²³ Muhammed Idris, Oral Interview, 60 years, Gagarawa town, Gagarawa LGA, Jigawa State,14/09/2020.

²⁴ Sarkin Fawa, 68 years Oral Interview, Butcher, motoya area, Maigatari LGA, Jigawa State 28/09/2020.

Gagarawa	776.18.7	776.18.0	= 7	-
Gumel	1575.16.6	1526.0.0	49.16.6	-
Maigatari	1764.43	1016.4.0	16.0.3	-
Sule-Tankarkar	1032.43	1016.4.0	16.0.3	-
Total	6587.11.8	6398.13.0	188.181	-

Source: NAK/MLG/NTE/64. Gumel N.A District Council's Estimates. 1980: P3

This table shows the yearly revenue collected by Gumel Emirate council and their shared expenditure according to Districts head.

Besides cattle, other livestock species such as goats, sheep, donkeys, rabbits, and poultry, were reared. These animals constituted an important source of revenue in the traditional economy of the Emirate. More significantly, they provided meat for traditional sacrifices and celebrations, and payment of native doctors for services rendered was made with these small livestock. Hens or chickens were reared predominantly by hundreds of fowls produced through local breeding methods and fed free on insects, seeds, herbage, roundworms, and waste food found in the compound. Some people provided them with the basic ration of grains every morning.

CROP CULTIVATION

Besides animal husbandry, crop cultivation was by far the most important economic activity and is still so today. It employs an overwhelming number of the Gumel Emirate population. To use Polly Hill; phrase on Nigerian agriculture, it is the matrix in which all other indigenous activity is set. The energies of the men, women, adults, and children were all engrossed in farm work.²⁵ The successful farmer attracted public emulation and acclaim. As agriculture was labor-intensive, tradition extolled the virtue of hard work while deprecating indolence. The importance of agriculture to the economy of the Gumel Emirate has been recognized since the pre-colonial period. The main crops grown by farmers were grains, corn, millet, cowpea, beans, or groundnut. These crops are grown for family consumption and sale. Subsidiary crops mainly or entirely for sale include tobacco, groundnuts, cassava, sweet potatoes, and henna as well as numerous vegetables. Grains and cowpeas produced by farmers were grown either for subsistence or for market. A considerable quantity of groundnut was used for making groundnut oil which was the only means of cooking oil available.

It is true that, almost everything in the emirate was conceived as having a cash value, almost everything had to be bought or sold, household sweepings and the dropping of small livestock and birds sold as manure. Cornstalk, various types of grasses, ground nuts haulms and shells, twinges, fodder-leaves, bean, wood, and palm fronds are all useful as raw materials for building and craft work, as fodder, or as firewood for cooking and all commanded a price.²⁶ Cattle were reared not only for the sake of prestige but for sale to butchers. Small livestock like sheep, goats where reared as well as fowls (*kaza*) are where mainly reared for eggs, which are nowadays much relished by some people, command a high price. Only donkey meat, which is a Muslim taboo, does not command a price in the market.

After independence, the government showed a lot of interest in the development of agriculture in its development plans. During the colonial period, a variety of crops were cultivated. The cultivation of cereal dominated traditional agriculture. The cereals mostly grown were maize (*Zea maize*), millet, (*Elcusine coracana*), and sorghum (*sorghum vulgare*). These were confined to the emirate. During the colonial period, a great variety of root crops such as cassava, native carrot (rizga in Hausa), Bambara nuts (*zeia subterranea*), groundnuts (*Arachis hypogaea*), and cotton were cultivated. Vegetables, such as pumpkin (*curcumbita pepo*), garden eggs, and cowpeas, were grown all over the emirate. This is because they could grow under different microclimate types.

²⁵ Polly, Hill cited in O.N. Njoku, "Economic History of Nigeria in the 19th and 20th century", p-19-22

²⁶ Waziri, Dalha. A History of Local Government System in Gumel Emirate p112.

According to Ado Gardi,²⁷ the cultivation of fruits was not given due consideration because fruits were not a serious component of the diet, unlike cash crops such as ground nuts, rice, and Bambara nuts that were the most important cash crops in the areas of study. The arrival of Europeans in the emirate influenced traditional agriculture through the introduction of high yield crops, such as cotton, groundnut and sesame. These crops are mainly cash crops and many farmers embark on mix cropping in order to earn a substantial amount of money by selling large part of their cash crops. This totally affect the economy of the emirate, as peoples have a means for livelihood. The most significant and common unit of labor in food production was the family. All its members provided the labor and constituted the unit of consumption in the traditional system. Men cleared the land of grasses and trees. A man needed assistance through friends and relationships. In some cases, women participated in paid labor to augment their incomes. In Nigeria's case, O.N Njoku,²⁸ states that the unit of agricultural labor was the family, made up of a man, his wives, and unmarried children. Polygamy and large families were the vogue partly as a means of producing a large labor force. Family labor was augmented through various means – slavery, clientage, hired as well as associational labor. In the emirate, there also existed women's farming units which contributed to increased food production in the rural areas. Women were spontaneously involved in the cultivation of food crops. This raises the productivity level of food production. By the 1970s, importance was attached to small-scale farmers who entered the food production sector.

In Gumel emirate, almost all primary and secondary schools had a farm at which limited rotational crops were grown. The farms and gardens were meant to motivate youths to participate in farm work. Exhausted farms were allowed to revert to rotational bush follow and a new farm was sought for. Tools such as knives, hoes, and axes were used in tilling the soil because as soil preparations were an important component of cultivation. Most peasant farmers after harvest allowed the grasses to decompose as organic manure. Agricultural activities as a whole were conducted according to climate variation, between dry and wet seasons.²⁹ Most crops had a single planting season. Beans and guinea corn or sorghum could grow in both the hot and the cold seasons respectively.

The Impact of Industry and Crafts

Local industry and crafts made an important contribution to the economy. This is because a large number of people in the emirate were self-employed in this sector, and raw materials, such as wood, clay, animal skins, and bamboo were available at little or no cost. The end products of the industries were used as domestic utensils and house furniture. The items produced in the emirate also attracted short and long-distance trade. This section will examine a few of these industries and crafts. The discussion that follows accords much space to calabash and wood carving, blacksmithing, tannery, weaving, and pottery which were the leading traditional crafts.

Carving

Carving is a long-existing and widespread craft in the Gumel Emirate. The ubiquity of the carving craft arose from the fact that there was hardly a community of some size that did not need the service of carvers. In other words, it was found in almost every village.³⁰ Carving, especially woodwork, is a long-established craft in the Gumel Emirate. Traditional carvers produced a wide range of domestic utensils and household furniture. Woodworkers manufactured wooden items such as mortars and pestles, trays, and handles of knives, axes, cutlasses, feeding dishes, and wooden chairs. These products were traded to other places. According to Baushi Katori,³¹ a good number of the products were exquisitely donned and some served as decorative in homes. This craft provided a means of livelihood to many people. The raw materials were obtained from trees such as *Prosopis Africanus* (*kirya*) *Parkia Clappertonian* (*dorawa*): and *Balanitis aegyptica* ("Aduwa"). These raw

²⁷ Ado Gardi, 40 years, Oral Interview, Cattle Herder, Dan adama area, Sule Tankar-kar LGA, Jigawa State, 10/09/2020.

²⁸ O.N. Njoku, "Economic History of Nigeria in the 19th and 20th century, p19-22

²⁹ A. Nglim. "Cattle industry in the North-West Province of Cameroon", PhD Thesis, Department of History and International Studies, University of Nigeria Nsukka, p33.

³⁰. O.N. Njoku, "Economic History of Nigeria in the 19th and 20th century p.40.

³¹ Katori, 62 years Oral Interview, Santarbi Area, Sule Tankar-kar LGA, Jigawa state 27/09/2020.

materials are in abundance and cost little, making it easy for people in the Gumel Emirate to fully participate in this business and earn a living from it. Therefore, wood carving is a widely spread craft. There was hardly a community of some size that did not have woodworkers and carvers, and their products were used for socio-religious and cultural purposes, such as drums and calabashes in most cases.

Calabash carving is a plant-based craft that the people practiced long before the colonial period. It was made from the creeping plants of the *Cucurbitaceae* family which was grown locally and in most parts of northern Nigeria. The fruits were gathered and cut open, the contents removed and formed into finished products to serve many purposes. Habu,³² a calabash maker, asserted that various shapes and designs of calabash are put to many purposes such as storage of food and water e.g., (fura & nono), and as dishes and spoons. Some were used as decorative domestic furniture, especially among the Fulani. Different types of calabashes served as an important commodity with which a Fulani mother usually gifts to her daughter during marriage. These types of craft were pursued beyond local consumption needs and the products were traded to distant places.

Blacksmithing

Iron is one of the crafts of Gumel Emirate from the pre-colonial times. Smithing is the process by which smelted or pig iron is manufactured into items for human use. The arts of the smith and the necessary allied trades of iron smelting and charcoal burning formed the most important industry in the area. It played a significant role in the life of the Gumel people, as elsewhere in Nigeria. This is because many other professions relied on its products for the production of their goods, such as farming implements like hoes, cutlasses, rakes, axes, knives, and local plows of different varieties. Hunters needed traps, hunting bells, iron arrow tips, spears, and guns, while woodworkers needed axes, /adzes, carving knives, and domestic utensils such as hinges, nails, and kitchen knives. These products were traded even far beyond Gumel Emirate. For instance, some building materials are produced by blacksmiths and most of the articles are demanded by farmers, butchers, hunters, and woodworkers in Gumel who needed them for their economic pursuits. They were produced beyond the local consumption and traded to long distance areas.

According to Belu Makeri,³³ there was hardly any segment of Gumel society that did not need the service of blacksmiths. With the imposition of colonial rule, the traditional crafts, including ironworking, began to experience hard times. European trading firms began to flood local markets with imported iron wares of various descriptions. Local crafts items could not compete against the imported ones and as such, the market for locally made goods began to dwindle. Despite the battering from the colonial rulers and the neglect by bourgeois independence governments, the smithing industry in the emirate exhibited astounding resilience and adaptability. According to Hamza Bagade,³⁴ one of the blacksmiths at Sule town in Gumel emirate, the ultimate consequence of this development was the abandoning of the local industries in favor of Europeans introduced cheaper and better-manufactured goods. The transition from the use of local tools to modern equipment led to unemployment and its resultant poverty. As many local industries closed down, many people became jobless. As a result, some started migrating to different urban areas such as Kano, Kaduna, Hadejia, and Nguru in Yobe State in search of greener pastures. Those who stayed back continued with their old traditional crafts and tried to earn a subsistence living out of that. Life has not been easy for these persons, especially as globalization makes it irresistible to advance on their craft and means of livelihood.

Tannery Industry

Tanning is one of the most important crafts of the Gumel people. Tannery industries specialize in making local bags, sandals, and wallets from the hides and skins of cattle and other livestock. Some leather works were produced from the skins of wild animals such as lions, tigers, hyenas, and reptiles. According to Audu Baduku,³⁵

³² Habu Mai kwarya, 50 years Oral Interview, Ubandawaki area, Sule Tankar-kar LGA, Jigawa State, 29/09/2023.

³³ Belu Makeri, 60years, Oral Interview, Garin Chiroma Area, Gagarawa LGA, Jigawa State, 25/03/2020.

³⁴ Hanza Bagade, 55 years, Oral Interview, Bagade town, Sule Tankar-kar LGA, Jigawa State, 1/06/2020.

³⁵ Audu Baduku, 63 years, Oral Interview, Tanner, Zingaran town, Maigatari LGA, Jigawa State, 15/07/2020.

a tanner, tanner's products in the emirate were readily available and abundant at little cost. The presence of a cattle market at Maigatari ensured a regular supply of animal hides and skins, the major raw materials Leatherworking is a very ancient craft among the Hausa and the Fulani. The tanners obtain hides and skins from butchers and traders from different parts of Jigawa State and beyond. The local craftsmen tan animal skins and hides by using tannic acid and *acacianilotica* (called "bagaruwa" in Hausa)

The leather products include sandals, skin water containers, knife blade covers, wallets, bags, set covers, airbags used by blacksmiths to pump the bellows (Zuga-zugi), the cover of drums, containers (guga) used by many people to draw and fetch water from wells especial by Fulani, during the dry season. Also, leather was used to produce sacks called (Taiki in Hausa) for carrying goods, especially farm produce, and sand for building local houses. Covering local camps like Guru and Laya in Hausa, another leather item is produced from animal skins and was used by Fulani to decorate themselves more especially during traditional ceremonies and festivals. Leather is a durable and flexible material, made from the tanning of skins primarily cattle hides, sheep, camel, and goat skins. It can be produced either locally or in modern tanneries factories.

Animal hides and skin were used also as Ponmo (processed large ruminant hides and skins) principally from cattle and camel's skins for human consumption, as a delicacy, and at times a substitute for beef. It provides a premium for hide producers and traders more than for the industry. Many people in the Emirate participate in this business and earn their living from it. The tannery industry in the Emirate is of considerable antiquity and, as indicated above, made possible the production of various local goods and services. The use of animal skins for ponmo was a result of the low price of skins for industrial use compared to ponmo.

Weaving

Weaving was a part of the craft industries in Gumel Emirate and played a significant role in the economy of Gumel and society because the people exploited parts of the plants in their habitat such as sisal to weave items for domestic uses. The items produced by weavers include mats, hand- fans, baskets, hats, ropes, (*igiyi* in Hausa) trays, (*fai-fai* in Hausa) (*chanhu*) containers and *mangala* (another type of container in Hausa) among others. All these products were made from sisal plants and were produced beyond local consumption needs and traded often to distant places.

According to Muhammed Madachi,³⁶ tannery, blacksmithing, carving, pottery, and weaving were among the most important crafts in Gumel Emirate. These craft industries played a significant role in that aspect of the economy and many people earned their living from it. It generated self-employment for many people. Sisal which is a resource used for weaving different materials grows in abundance and is obtained at little or no cost. The sisal is of two types: the short and the long types which are used in weaving. After the sisal had been cut, it was spread out under the sun to dry. Thereafter, the dried sisal is split into narrow strands and put in cold or hot water to soften, preparatory for weaving different types and designs of products.

Pottery

Pottery was one of the most ancient crafts of mankind, pre-dating the Neolithic Revolution. Traditional pottery making involved processes most of which were delicate and demanded enormous patience and manual dexterity. The raw material for pottery was clay, and it was found in different places and beneath varying types of surface soils. Clay, the principal raw material, was treated as a deity in Gumel. After clay had been won, it was weathered and dried. It was thereafter roughly pounded, slated, tempered, and kneaded.³⁷ Pottery products were in demand beyond the immediate production vicinity. The products found ready markets in Sule Tan kar-kar and Asayaya which were the focal points for the distribution.

Pottery was mostly a women's craft even though some men engaged in it. Many varieties of useful domestic utensils were produced. They include cooking and sauce pots, vats for dyeing, water pots, and dishes. The products

³⁶ Muhammed Madachi, 50 years, Oral Interview, Tenner, Gumel Town. Gumel LGA, Jigawa State, 20/07/2020.

³⁷ , O.N. Njoku, "Economic History of Nigeria in the 19th and 20th century p. 37.

were molded entirely by hand. Some were used for ancestral worship, and some served as decorative objects while some were used to store cereal and as musical instruments. Pottery production was at its peak during the dry season and at its lowest during the wet season. The market for the finished products was widely dispersed in the village settlements. The circulation of pottery products was limited to a restricted catchment area because of their fragility. A narrow market in turn tended to limit the level of specialization within the industry; the products of the pottery craft were traded mostly within Emirate and to some distant communities.

Gumel Economic Relations and Inter-Regional Trade

Trade relations in cattle in Gumel can be assumed to be as old as cattle farming or rearing itself. It probably predates Gumel market, and so goes back to pre-colonial times. During pre-colonial times, the market for cattle was most probably not large. Cattle herders exchanged cattle products and a few of their animals to meet their subsistence needs.

The products of Gumel Emirate were derived from farming and animal breeding. The production of agricultural produce and craft goods went beyond the subsistence needs of the producers. As a result, the economy of Gumel Emirate was very much market-oriented. Variations in natural and human resources base dictated economic interdependence. Trade was in consequence a crucial component of the economy for, it is through trade that disparities in productive capacities between communities are bridged. The market was ubiquitous in the study area. Generally, market days in large localities did not coincide with market days in small localities. However, they could be taxonomized into two: domestic and external markets.³⁸

Trade in Gumel Emirate appeared to have been organized at three levels; local-within the villages and chiefdoms, regional-among the chiefdoms like Maigatari and Sule Tan kar-kar, and long distance or external. No clear line, however, can be drawn as to the people who patronized the various markets. Border villages might prefer to attend a market within a village or chiefdom which was held on the same day, since there was some spatial and temporal distribution of markets to facilitate and maximize the distribution of goods. Three classes of market existed. First, some sold their agricultural products to big sellers within and outside the Emirate. They dominated other markets in the volume of goods sold and in the population that attended, like the Maigatari market. The second category was intermediate. Such markets were mostly important in the sub-regional areas and served the local population in the distribution of imported goods and sale of locally produced foodstuffs. The third category consisted of tiny markets in areas of low population density and poor accessibility, like Dangwanki, Maifaru, Maitsamiya, Albasu, Yandamo, and Danladi markets. At the local markets, trade items were dominated by millet, guinea corn, sesame, groundnuts, and beans. There were many subsistence farmers in Gumel Emirate in the narrow sense that, they consumed all the grain that they produced.³⁹

Cooperative organizations within the Emirate carried out the collection and marketing of foodstuffs. The objectives of cooperative marketing were aimed at; rationalizing the marketing system, handling larger quantities of better graded and stored produce, fixing the prices of produce, using modern machinery, and eliminating middlemen thereby obtaining a large share of the price paid by the final purchasers.⁴⁰ Gumel Emirate cooperative society is a combination of stakeholders from within Maigatari, Gagarawa, and Sule Tankar-kar local government areas. The commodities that these cooperatives invested in were corn, beans, benniseed, groundnuts, and rice. The cooperative also assisted farmers with fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural tools, and other facilities. Also, with the assistance of these cooperatives, members were able to have access to expensive equipment (tractor and vehicle) collecting produce, etc., to help the farmer reduce the cost of production. Gumel Emirate cooperative includes the Gumel Cooperative Society and WACOT (West Africa Cotton).⁴¹

³⁸ A. Nglim. "Cattle industry in the North-West Province of Cameroon", p19-22.

³⁹ Jigawa State, News Letter, Ministry of Trade and Commerce, Vol.4, No.6, 2000

⁴⁰ Alhaji Muhammadu Dagwaje, 71 years, Oral Interview, Head of Market, 12/01/2023

⁴¹ Jigawa State, News Letter, Ministry of Trade and Commerce,

Kola constituted a strong test attraction to traders and farmers. Hausa traders came in to purchase it. By its strategic location, Gumel served as a vital nexus between some villages and towns as well as with the Niger Republic. Gumel Emirate, therefore, emerged as an entrepot for kola nuts and other vital commodities either entering or leaving the region.⁴² The neighboring Emirate and communities brought numerous livestock which were largely purchased by outsiders who came to trade in Gumel. Mats, tobacco, bags, and caps were exported to Niger in return for livestock, date, and potash.⁴³

Conclusion

The aspects of the Gumel Emirate economy involve agriculture, food crop production, trade and crafts, as well as cattle production for various purposes including beef, hides, milk production, leather goods and refining for other products. Gumel Emirate is essentially an agricultural community in the present Jigawa State of Nigeria and has gained fame as major cattle producing and trading center and also served as an entrepot for local and long-distance trade. Cattle production in the area is of considerable antiquity. The Emirate is prominent in cattle and crop production due to related to several natural and human factors. The most important of these is the location of the Emirate on the border between Nigeria and Niger Republic. Niger Republic is very well endowed in cattle rearing but has very little domestic market for cattle, and Nigeria has a very huge domestic market for cattle including the Miagatari International market in Gumel Emirate. Gumel produced a large number of cattle and other commodities, its domestic production is heavily supplemented by the influx of cattle from the Niger- Republic, making the community one of the most important producers and trading centers of cattle and crops in Nigeria.

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