

PRODUCERS OR SUBSIDISERS: BEROM WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN THE COLONIAL ECONOMY ON THE JOS PLATEAU

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ABSTRACT

The paper discussed the nature of Berom sexual or gender division of labour in household agricultural production in the colonial economy of the Jos Plateau in Northern Nigeria. The research methodology was based on unstructured oral interviews. The study showed that the British colonial economy transformed the Berom pre-colonial sexual division of labour in household agricultural production from that of complementary division of labour between the genders to that of independent women producers. Several factors such as cultural change, taxation and the introduction of tin mining during the colonial period were responsible for this change. Even though Berom women gained autonomy as independent agricultural producers it paradoxically turned them into subsidizers of the low wages that was paid to the predominantly male mining laborers by foreign mining companies in the Jos tin mines. This made Berom women to be economically subservient to both the men and British economic interest

KEYWORDS: Agricultural Production, Women in Household