

**“THE IMPACT OF WOMEN COLONIALISM ON NIGERIAN WOMEN
THE CASE OF PROSTITUTION IN IDOMA SOCIETY 1930-1960”**

BY

**YAKUBU ABOKI OCHEFU
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR**

**PAPER PRESENTED AT A CONFERENCE ON THE IMPACT
OF COLONIALISM ON NIGERIAN WOMEN, 16-18 OCTOBER
1989, AT THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN.**

Women

Sweeper

Smearing floors and walls

With cow dung and black soil

Cock, ayah, the baby tied on
your back,

Vomiting,

Washer of dishes

Planting, weeding, harvesting,

Store-keeper, builder

Runner of errands

Cart, lorry

Donkey ...

Woman of Africa

What are you not?

Song of Ocol Okot p'Bitek

INTRODUCTION

For many scholars, the African woman has many dimensions. This can be exemplified from the quotation given overleaf its crudeness notwithstanding. Historically, the African – Nigerian woman is recognized as a very important element in the society. But after here the interest stops. In a nutshell, given their importance to society, women have not been studied with a degree of seriousness commensurate with this importance. This is particularly so when we examine our colonial experience. For while the very important political, economic and institutional changes that occasioned British colonialism and its impact on Nigerian communities have been studied in detail, the specific manner which these changes affected Nigerian women remains to be seen. In most of our history books, besides highlighting the role of women in resisting taxes as in the case of the famous Aba Women's Riot, to their entrepreneurial skills, very little else seemed to have happened to them during colonial rule and after. Yet we know, especially from studies of their male counterparts, that colonialism, transformed many Nigerian societies culturally and economically. But because the character of colonial penetration and exploitation differed from place to place, and more importantly, because colonialism engineered uneven economic growth and development, the exact nature and of its impact differed from one community to another.

This paper is basically an exploratory attempt into an aspect of our colonial experience that has remained opaque. It explores the relationship between colonialism and prostitution using Idoma society as a case study. It is the contention of this paper that one outcome of colonialism in Idoma society, was the development of prostitution. As far as that society is concerned, the adage that prostitution is the oldest profession is not correct. Prostitution for them was a product of economic and social problem brought by British colonialism.

For the sake of clarity, the paper is divided into three sections. The first attempts a definition of prostitution and examines it in critical detail. The second section looks at the economy and society of the Idoma at the eve of colonialism to the period after the Second World War. The emphasis here is on the role and position of women in the domestic economy and polity. The third section examines the process by which prostitution developed in Idomaland and the problems that occasioned it. The sources that inform this paper include archival reports, oral interviews conducted by the writer and a number of published studies on prostitution.

THE PROSTITUTE:

For a number of sociologists, a precise definition of prostitution would emphasize two important elements. The first is the exchange of money or valuable materials for sexual activity. The second is the relatively indiscriminate availability of such a transaction to individuals other than spouses or friends.¹ A prostitute is thus defined as a 'person who for immediate payment in money or other valuable will engage in sexual activity with any other person known or unknown, who meets minimal requirements as to gender, age, ethnic group,

cleanliness etc.’² Generally, there are clear distinctions between a prostitute and a “lady”. These distinctions are fundamental and inform society’s view on prostitution. While the ‘lady’ is a private woman. The prostitute is a public woman.³ The ‘lady’ ideally gives love freely in a monogamous union with emotional involvement of both parties. For the prostitute on the other hand, sexual activity is characterized by barter, promiscuity and emotional indifference.⁴

Here prostitution is considered simply as sexual activity. But if we see prostitution as a service occupation, the element of barter, promiscuity and emotional indifference is not particular to prostitution alone. In any exchange situation or for any service, payment is customary. Promiscuity alone, need not characterize prostitution. Some prostitutes keep one or two clients just as corporations retain some lawyers. Furthermore, as a social service, promiscuity can be regarded as a manifestation of ‘quality service’. Emotional indifference is necessary of all professionals who deal with human beings is to be maintained.⁵ Clients should be processed efficiently, quickly and dispassionately. Allowing affection to develop for clients is considered foolish as it exposes the prostitute to emotional hurt and possible fiscal exploitation.⁶ Experiencing sexual arousal of orgasm is regarded not only as unprofessional, but fatiguing and hence inefficient. This explains why some prostitutes prefer one round stance to all night sessions.⁷

It has been argued that entry into prostitution is more often than not, voluntary. This is basically correct given the fact that except in every few cases, women are hardly physically coerced into prostitution. However, the choice of prostitution either as a full-time occupation or as a means of making money to meet a specific targets, is often informed by wider economic and social problems and/or constraints.⁸ In many societies, prostitution has been more common amongst economically disadvantaged females such as slaves, captives, divorces, widows, outcasts and others who are considered unmarriageable. Such women often resort to prostitution as a solution to economic problems. In some however, religion has been the motivating factor.⁹

Prostitution also has a cultural dimension. In some societies, or at some point of their history, prostitution was held in high esteem.¹⁰ In most societies, it is tolerated as a necessary evil. Here, prostitutes are made to wear special clothes or live in special quarters of the town.¹¹

SOCIETY AND ECONOMY OF THE IDOMA

Idoma is the name by which the people of the Idoma ethnic group of Otukpo, Okpokwu and Ado Local Government Areas of Benue State refer to themselves and their language and are understood as such by other Nigerian peoples. Numbering nearly half a million people, the Idoma occupy a belt of territory that stretches from the Southern banks of the Benue river to the northern fringes of Igboland. They have as their neighbours the Tiv and Egedde to the east, the Igala to the west and the Eza and Nsukka Igbo to the south.¹²

Like many Nigerian peoples, the Idoma were and still are predominantly an

agrarian people. Their major staple crop is yam. Other crops such as guinea-corn, maize, soya beans, beniseed, cowpeas and bambara nuts are widely cultivated. In pre-colonial Idoma society, the primary unit of social, political and economic organization was the compound unit – *Odudole*. This consisted of a man, his wife or wives, children and a number of relatives. At the microscopic level, the compound unit provided the labour for production and determined the character of distribution and property relations. At the head of the compound unit, was the family head – *Adakole*, who was usually the oldest male member of the compound. His authority within the context of traditional law was unquestionable. The family head controlled access to the means of production, distributed returns on labour, and rewarded deserving members of the compound unit from time to time.

Division of labour within the domestic economy, was based on sex and age. Adult males cleared the virgin lands for cultivation, cultivated specific crops like yams, traded in specific commodities like slaves, iron tools and firearms, hunted, and fashioned a wide variety of tools. Adult women assisted in cultivation especially in planting, weeding and harvesting, cultivated specific crops such as maize, beans, etc., processed foods and traded in a wide variety of commodities. In addition, women gathered roots, fruits, berries, mushrooms, medicinal herbs and firewood. They also monopolized the ceramic, textile and brewing industries. Of all this, the brewing of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages was the most profitable.

Idoma women as we noted earlier, participated extensively in commercial activities. The vast majority of traders in pre-colonial Idoma society were women. However, for a number of reasons, their activities were restricted to a number of commodities. But more important than this, is the fact that within the context of traditional law, Idoma women could not own property. Whatever property she owned, belonged to her husband and his male heirs. This fact has led some observers to conclude that the social status of Idoma women (wives) was at best servile.¹³ This is not correct. Idoma society or its male component realized and appreciated the role women played in both the reproduction of members for the community and the production of material livelihood. It was the desire of every woman because to a large extent, the material development of his compound depended on her. In recognition of this fact, it was customary to reward hard working women.

It is important to note here that while women were fully integrated into the domestic economy at all levels, they suffered a number of disabilities. First, they were completely alienated from political power. Traditional law rationalized this in terms of the fact that women who could marry ‘outsiders’, and since men always held the position of family head, appointing women into political offices, would amount to having ‘strangers’ ruling in the community. Second, on grounds of religion, women were excluded from a number of social and economic institutions. For example, although women constituted the bulk of traders in the society, the market master was usually a man. Also women were not allowed to trade in so-called male commodities such as slaves, horses, firearms and iron tools.

These disabilities notwithstanding, Idoma women enjoyed considerable social and

economic prestige. Their roles were well defined and respected by their male counterparts. However, given the fact that the economic structures were held together by the labour of both sexes, whatever distortions affected either sex was bound to affect the other. It was under these circumstances that economic distortions introduced by colonialism began to affect Idoma women in a manner that led some of them into prostitution.

COLONIALISM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROSTITUTION:

Idomaland like most parts of Nigeria was violently incorporated into the British colonial empire between 1900 and 1920.¹⁴ Also like other Nigerian communities, the Idoma in the face of the overwhelming technological and organizational superiority of the British, resisted the erosion of their political and economic independence. As it has been noted elsewhere, the establishment of colonialism was to enable Britain reap advantages over and above what would have been possible within the framework of free market relations.¹⁵ To facilitate this type of exploitation, the simple reproductive cycles of the domestic economics of many Nigerian communities had to be destroyed and reproduced under the hegemony of finance capital. Through forced labour, taxation, destruction of local industries and the commoditization of agriculture, these intentions were quickly realized.

With particular reference to the Idomaland, one scholar notes that it was an area where the colonial administration did not appear to have much affection or particular interest.¹⁶ Both colonizers and colonized had formed opinions of each other during the conquest and 'pacification'. Much of these had hardened into attitudes that lasted for the better part of the colonial period.¹⁷ For the British, the Idoma were a 'singularly barbaric people, ill-tempered, intransigent, totally and uncivilized and of low intelligence'.¹⁸ To the Idoma on the other hand, the Europeans were hostile, alien, exploitative and destroyers of customs and traditions.¹⁹ Idomaland was not noted for any cash crop or minerals, therefore, its only importance to the colonial economy was in terms of supply labour and food to the more 'productive' areas.²⁰ But given the fact that many other Nigerian communities performed this role, the importance of the Idoma in overall terms was quite insignificant. Overtime, Idomaland became a neglected backwater and a hardship and punishment area for insubordinate staff and a dumping ground for mediocre officials.²¹

Despite its rather 'peripheral' nature, the land and the people to perform the roles assigned to them by colonialism. In this regard, the supply of labour and taxation was very important. Between 1909 and 1923, thousands of Idoma men were forcibly recruited to build roads, bridges and the railway line from Enugu to Jos.²² Many of them performed these tasks for upwards of one year or more with little or no wages. Forced labour had the effect of withdrawing large numbers of men from the domestic economy. This shortage in turn, had the effect of reducing output in productive terms.

More devastating in its impact than forced labour was the introduction of taxation. Taxation has been described as an integral part of colonialism.²³ Beside being a source of revenue for the administration, taxation influenced the structure of economic activity, and

facilitated the adoption of metropolitan currency. Taxes were first introduced in Idomaland

between 1920 and 1924.²⁴ The unit of assessment was a man and his wife and the rate was pegged at 6d.²⁵ In the 1924/25 assessment year this was raised to 1/-.²⁶

The introduction of taxes was both inconveniencing and irritating to the Idoma. It was inconvenient insofar as taxes had to be paid in nickel currency the circulation of which was very low. Given the absence of wage employment and/or cash crops, the Idoma were hard pressed as far as getting the coins to pay their taxes was concerned. The mode of assessment and collection made the entire exercise very irritating. Assistant District Officers, village heads and native authority officials, counted homesteads and visited farms where they measured acreages under cultivation and calculated estimated yields and incomes.²⁷ The possession of more than one wife was regarded as a sign of affluence and this attracted a higher tax incidence.²⁸ The mode of collection also left much to be desired. Defaulters were arrested and jailed and their valuable property confiscated. In the absence of a culprit, his wife and children were seized and held in custody until he showed up.

The Idoma like many Nigerian people reacted violently to taxation. Tax Collectors were attacked and some cases assassinated.²⁹ Whole communities were sometimes abandoned during the assessment and collection exercise while some of the harder pressed ones simply committed suicide. In the case of the Egedde, discontentment over taxes resulted in open rebellion between 1927 and 1928.³⁰ By 1900 however, the payment annually of taxes had been accepted as a *fait accompli* by most Idoma communities. In this regard, practical steps towards meeting this obligation were now sought for.

The extension of taxation to women in 190 introduced a new dimension to the problem. The taxation of Idoma women was rationalized thus:

The Idoma women as a wage earner stand in close relation to much as her earning are the outcome of the produce of the land given by her husband.³¹

Furthermore, it was estimated that:

Since the value of women activity was an average of 2/- per week (4.5.0 p.a.) per woman ... It seems to follow that the assessment per adult female should be slightly larger than per adult male, a view which the village heads when consulted thereon, were Unanimous.³²

Basically the argument of the colonial authorities was that within the context of the domestic economy Idoma men who produced yams and grains, but was realized by women who either sold these commodities in their raw state or processed them into other commodities that had very high use and/or exchange values generated surplus value.

By this time, Idoma men and women had three main ways of raising money to pay

their taxes. They sold their foodstuffs especially yams to Ibo traders who ferried them to the tin mines of Jos or to Enugu and Port Harcourt. A few lucky ones got employed into the colonial administration as carriers, soldiers, native authority officials and casual labourers. A large number of Idoma men migrated to the cocoa plantations of western Nigeria, Fernando Po and the Tin mines of Jos.³³ Of these three methods, the last was most popular. For one thing the low price of foodstuffs, throughout the period 1930-1940 made it difficult for farmers to raise enough money to meet tax and other obligations. Secondly, very few people were employed by the colonial administration as conscious efforts were made to minimize administrative costs. The third option therefore, offered the best prospect for the greater majority Idoma men.

Beginning in trickles from the late 1920's, the phenomenon of migrant labour assumed tremendous proportions after 1930. It was estimated that between 1932 and 1940 an average of 50,000 men left Idomaland annually as migrant labourers.³⁴ This number increased substantially as many Idoma man were drafted to serve in the colonial army after the outbreak of the second world war. One major effect of this massive outflow of labour on the domestic economy in general and the position of women of in particular was that it created severe structural distortions. Married women whose husbands joined the migration train found themselves having to perform unfamiliar roles. Traditionally, women who lost their husbands through death were 'inherited' by her brother-in-laws who took up the responsibility of her upkeep and that of her children. Alternatively, she could return to her parents or remarry. In the case of divorce especially on grounds of adultery or sterility, the women were left to fend for themselves. This was particularly so if her conduct had 'stained' the family name. Depending on her age, physical abilities and entrepreneurial skills, such women often carved for themselves a niche in the domestic economy.

But in the case of migrant labour, the men only left for short periods of time usually one or two years. Their absence during this period, given the division of labour within the domestic economy, began to cause considerable economic hardship for some women. Most of them began to play the roles identified by Bitek in every conceivable way.³⁵ The only difference being the absence of their husbands. Furthermore, the eventual return of the menfolk offered very little or no benefits whatsoever on women in particular and the society in general. This was largely because the bulk of their earnings were consumed by taxes and to a lesser extent the purchase of consumer durables. Also the men often went back to the plantations or mines after a short 'break' at home. As characteristic, of most labour exporting societies, the contribution of migrant labour to the economic development of Idomaland was negligible.³⁶

As we noted earlier, some Idoma women not only had to fill the vacuum left by their men, but also had to grapple with the problems that occasioned this. For the unmarried ones, the situation was a bit complicated. First, there was a general scarcity of eligible bachelors. Secondly, and arising from the above problem was that many young women became junior wives to more established males. Even this began to prove difficult as the acquisition of

affluence and thus attracted high taxes. This in turn, put many unmarried women in a rather

precarious position. In the face of these multidimensional problems, Idoma women like their men had done earlier, had to devise alternative ways of making life more comfortable for themselves within the society. It was in these circumstances that prostitution as a way of overcoming fundamental economic problems emerged in Idoma society from the late 1930's and early 1940's.

According to a number of oral information, the Idoma word for prostitution, *akwuna* is derived from an Igbo word that means the same thing.³⁷ These informants also maintain that the first setoff women identified as *akwuna* were Igbo origin. These prostitutes operated around the new railway camp at Otukpo and were patronized by the large labour force in this camp. These prostitutes, it was further believed, followed the railway line from Port-Harcourt and moved as the line progressed north-wards. It is also believed that the first Idoma women who became prostitutes started off as petty commodity traders selling food and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages to casual labourers on the line. Through interaction with Ibo prostitutes, some of them began to slowly turn to prostitution because of higher returns on 'investments' and/or 'labour'. As an informant put it, the cost of one round of sex in 1940 was between 2d and 3d.³⁸ Because of the high demand, the average prostitute working full-time could daily make between 1/- and 2/-. Compared to the figure of an average of 2/- she stood to make a week from selling foodstuff, or beverages, prostitution, was extremely profitable.³⁹

In addition to being profitable, the 'cost' of entering into prostitution was low compared to other economic activities. Those who hoped to sell food or beverages had to contend with the cost of giant pots plates, firewood, support labour erection of sheds etc. They also had to contend with local health authorities and revenue officials. Furthermore, competition was quite fierce and the market relatively small. For many Idoma women who had moved out of their villages because of economic hardships and had hoped to better their fortunes in the urban centers, prostitution became the 'easiest' and quickest way of doing so.

We note here that given the traditional position on adultery and promiscuity, the reaction of Idoma men to this development was rather strange. Some fathers and husbands encouraged and cajoled their daughters and junior wives into prostitution.⁴⁰ Others frowned at it but did very little else. This reaction I believe, was informed by the economic benefits they hoped or stood to realize from spouses or daughters who become prostitutes.⁴¹

After the Second World War, prostitution in Idomaland took a wider dimension. Many Idoma soldiers returned from the war to find their wives pregnant for or married to other men. The matrimonial crises that arose there-from, sent a large number of women into prostitution.⁴² By now, this choice had more or less become obvious. These 'new breed' headed for Kaduna, Zaria, Jos, Keffi, Kano and southwards to Port Harcourt and Enugu. After 1950, the tin mines, of Jos, textile factories of Kaduna and the military base of Zaria became the centers of concentration of Idoma prostitutes.⁴³ Their occasional but grandiose visits home had the effect of stimulating those who suffered no particular economic hardships to venture

out. As one informant put it, prostitution by this time had become a sort of 'noble'

profession.⁴⁴ Some prostitutes were the first to build houses with zinc roofs, furnished with half upholstery chairs, bedrooms with four-poster beds and cotton mattresses and kitchens decked with multi-coloured enamel pots and plates. They came home with trunk boxes filled with second-hand clothes and cheap imitation jewellery that they distributed to their younger ones. They also brought home 'exotic' foods such as rice and canned meat and fish. The more enterprising ones bought bicycles, and radio for their husbands, in-laws or boyfriends and helped pay their taxes.⁴⁵

The prostitutes having been to cities unlike migrant labourers who worked in rural plantations, and because of the social nature of their occupation were a sort of vanguard of certain aspects of western cultures.⁴⁶ Together with soldiers and a growing number of men who found employment in urban centers, prostitutes were a major link between many rural Idoma communities and other parts of Nigeria. Also through prostitution, a large number of Idoma women began to enjoy a considerable degree of economic independence and prosperity over and above their men folk.

THE IMPACT OF PROSTITUTION

The impact of prostitution can be analyzed on two levels. The level of the individual and that of the society. At the individual level prostitution more often than not, brought short-term economic and social benefits. While age and beauty was on their side, the prostitutes rode on a wave of economic prosperity. On the long run however, when health/diseases factors, personal demoralization, economic waste and the physical hardship inherent in prostitution began to manifest itself, the prostitute was left high and dry. Some got married and settled down to normal family life.⁴⁷ The far-sighted ones built or bought houses in urban centers and became land-ladies upon 'retirement'. Some started small businesses usually eating-houses and/or drinking parlours whose specialty included special Idoma dishes and alcoholic beverages. Others became 'contractors' recruiting, initiating and organizing younger ones into the business and leaving off a percentage of their incomes. The vast majority of them hung on to the profession rendering services to cripples, lepers, primary and secondary school boys, truck pushers etc. However, because prostitution as an economic problem responds to economic laws, its practitioners are often in high demand. Long distance travelers, military personnel, labour gangs working on construction sites and even married men who require skills their wives cannot produce, often seek sex as a commodity.

At the level of the society, prostitution by Idoma women has had negative economic and cultural effects. First prostitution as an occupation is not productive. More importantly, it denies the society a substantial labour force that could have otherwise been productive. Like migrant labour, the export of a potential labour force via prostitution made many Idoma communities suffer economic and infrastructural underdevelopment.⁴⁸ While it is true that their 'remittances' helped in solving some economic problems, the contribution of prostitution as an economic activity to sustained economic growth is at best negative.

Prostitution also had the effect of denying many Idoma women western education. Until very recently, very few Idoma women went to school. For many of those who did not

marry early enough or did not marry at all, prostitution became the vogue.⁴⁹ Arising from this, many Idoma women have not been able to contribute positively to the development of their society in particular and the country to the development of their society in particular and the country in general. From a cultural perspective, prostitution overtime became synonymous with Idoma women. In the old Northern Nigeria, Idoma women were perceived as the most adulterous of all northern Nigerian women. In some places such stereotypes still persists.⁵⁰

CONCLUSION

The view that prostitution is a product of capitalist society is often dismissed as communist dogma. This is particularly so given the assertion by many, that prostitution being the oldest profession predates the emergence of capitalism. The evidence from Idoma as this paper has tried to show contradicts the latter position. In the case of the Idoma, prostitution was a product of capitalist penetration of their domestic economies. The demands of colonialism gave birth to prostitution. It emerged as a response to new economic problem that affected them harshly. But as a solution to economic problem, prostitution ushered into Idoma society a new set of economic and social problem that the society is still grappling with today.

NOTES

¹Abraham Flexner, *Prostitution in Europe*. (New York: Century Press, 1914), p.11.

²*Ibid.*, p.12.

³P.J. Goldsthen, *Prostitution and Drugs*. (Toronto, Lexinton Books, 1979), p.29.

⁴*Ibid.*, p.29.

⁵*Ibid.*, p.37.

⁶This is particularly so given the fact that ‘boyfriends’ more often than not do pay. Interview with Kasua Adamu, age 45+, Kaduna, August, 1987.

⁷This information was supplied by the above informant and corroborated by six others in a group interview conducted by the writer in Moonshine Hotel, Doki Road, Kakuri, Kaduna in August, 1987. Beside being risky, leaving their premises for all night session was very fatiguing.

⁸In a small survey carried out in Kaduna it was estimated that 80% of all Idoma prostitutes were driven into it by economic hardships.

⁹See some examples of this in P. Lacroix (trans. G. Putnam) *History of Prostitution Amongst The Peoples of the World From Antiquity to the Present*. (New York: Plenum Books, 1978).

¹⁰*Ibid.*, See Introduction.

¹¹The ‘red light’ districts of Amsterdam, and Paris, Soho of London and the famous Herbsersstrasse of Hamburg are few examples.

¹²For a detailed study of the History of the Idoma, see E.O. Erim, *Idoma Nationality 1600-1900: Problems of Studying the Origin and Development of Ethnicity*. (Nugu: Fourth Dimension, 1981).

¹³C.K. Meek, “Ethnographic Report on Idoma Division”, AR/ANT/1/6 National Archives, Kaduna, p.94.

¹⁴For a detailed study of this, see V.G. Okwu, ‘The Establishment of Colonial Administration in Idomaland, 1921-1930’, *Savanna*. (Vol,5, No.1, 19796), pp. 29-44.

¹⁵B. Onimode, *Imperialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria*, (London: Zed Press, 1983), p. 29-37.

¹⁶V.G. Okwu, “The Establishment of Colonial Administration”, p.29.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p.32.

¹⁸A.C. Francis, “Report on Okpoga on Division August, 1926”, ACC. 109. National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁹Y. A. Ochefu, “The Evolution of Chiefdoms in Pre-Colonial Idomaland: The Case of Ugboju Clan”. (B.A. Thesis, University of Calabar, 1982), p.98.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p.100.

²¹V. G. Okwu, “The Establishment of Colonial Administration in Idomaland”, p.32.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 43.

²³B. Onimode, *Imperialism and Underdevelopment.*, p.38.

²⁴V.G. Okwu, “The Establishment of Colonial Administration in Idomaland”, p.37.

²⁵AR/ASS/P/1 Northern Nigeria – Idoma Division: List of Historical and Notable Events, December 1918-1936”. National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷AR/ASS/1/3 “Tax Assessment – Idoma Division” July, 1922”. National Archives, Kaduna, p.2.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p.5.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p.5.

³⁰V.G. Okwu, “The Establishment of Colonial Administration in Idomaland”, p.43.

³¹AR/ASS/1/4 “Tax Assessment – Idoma Division, 1930”, National Archives, Kaduna, p.2.

³²*Ibid.*, p.3.

³³For more on the migrations to Fernando Po and Jos, see H. Tapela “Nigerian Labour For Fernando Po” (Pt.1) *The Calabar Historical Journal* (Vol.3, No.1, September, 1985), pp. 36-56, and B. Frennd, *Capital and Labour in the Nigerian Tin Mines.* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

³⁴ACC 1419 “Labour Matters – Idoma Division, Vol.I”. National Archives, Kaduna.

³⁵See Okot p’Bitek, *Son of Lawino: Song of Ocol.* (Ibadan, Heinemann Books, 1984), p.133.

³⁶For example see H. Tapela’s Labour Migrations: A Factor in the origins of Underdevelopment of Nyasaland, 1891 – 1913” *The Calabar Historical Journal*,

(Vol.2, No.1, June, 1978), pp. 151-165.

³⁷Interview with Igbe Adafa, ex-soldier, age 60+ at Otukpo, September 1987. Amedu Ode, retired native authority staff, age 68, Otukpo, September, 1987, Ochekwu Ogbole, ex-soldier, age 60, Otukpo, September 1987, and Shaibu Negedu, ex-soldier, age 60, Otukpo, September, 1986.

³⁸Interview with Amedu Ode.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹Given the economic hardship during this period, it was quite difficult for cash strapped parents not to accept such monies.

⁴²See G.E. Ode “The Impact of British Colonial Administration on the Peoples of Idoma Division 1908-1950” (M.A. Thesis, ABU, Zaria, 1984), p.250.

⁴³Interview with Kasua Adamu.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶There are numerous examples of such women in Otukpo town today.

⁴⁷See A. Edo “Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Nigeria: A Case Study of Idoma Division 19908-1960”. (Unpublished manuscript not dated).

⁴⁸Many young girls still join the prostitution train even till date.

⁴⁹The large numbers of Akpoto (i.e. Idoma) Karua or prostitute in many Northern Nigerian cities have helped to perpetuate these stereotypes.