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**Daughters of the Clay, Women of the Farm:
Women, Agricultural Economic Development, and Ceramic Production
in Bungoma District, Western Province, Kenya**

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an ethnographic study of women, agriculture and ceramic production among Babukusu, a subnation of the larger Abaluyia cultural group living in Bungoma District, Western Kenya. The ethnographic data are analyzed in the context of the theories of delocalization and marginalization. The dissertation traces developments among Babukusu from the colonial period in the nineteenth century up until the present time. It is argued that much of the Bukusu political, economic, sociocultural and ideological life have been transformed by the process of delocalization. This has been clearly seen in the introduction of cash crops, particularly sugarcane, which has tremendously affected land values, distribution of wealth, quality of education and the marginalization of women. Pottery manufacture --- by both women and men ---among Babukusu has remained largely at the individual, household level. It has been transformed into an enterprise for earning small amounts of cash in the context of substantial rural poverty. The dissertation also contrasts the individual-centered pottery production found among Babukusu with the more advantageous cooperative organizations developed among the potters of Murang'a District of the Central Province of Kenya.

Murang'a