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FAVOURING A DEMONISED PLANT: KHAT AND ETHIOPIAN SMALLHOLDER-ENTERPRISES



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Nordic Africa Institute, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 244 x 170 mm. Language: English. Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Khat is a plant native to Ethiopia that has been consumed over several centuries as a mental and physical stimulant. This report outlines khat s role as a source of livelihood. Khat, dubbed a social ill by many, is at the same time part and parcel of the livelihoods of many others. With consumption of the stimulant spreading to many parts of Africa, Europe, North America, Asia and Australia, khat production has become a controversial global issue. In most European and North American countries khat is illegal. The debates so far focus on the consumption of khat and its allegedly harmful health, economic and social effects. The argument here is that expanded khat production, driven by growing demand for the stimulant, is made possible through multidimensional links between producers, sellers and others. Today, khat production is part of the wider agrosilvi-pasture complex that characterises Ethiopian rural landscapes. At the farm level, khat shares space with food and tree crops and contributes cash to the household economy. The fact that its production is a smallholder venture and is expanding through a variety of farming systems indicates its importance to cultivators and their use of land. This paper is not exhaustive, but makes an exploratory attempt to highlight khat-related livelihood issues and seeks to contribute to the ongoing debates on the stimulant and to prompt further research.



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