



# 4 Months in Togo, West Africa among the Ewes



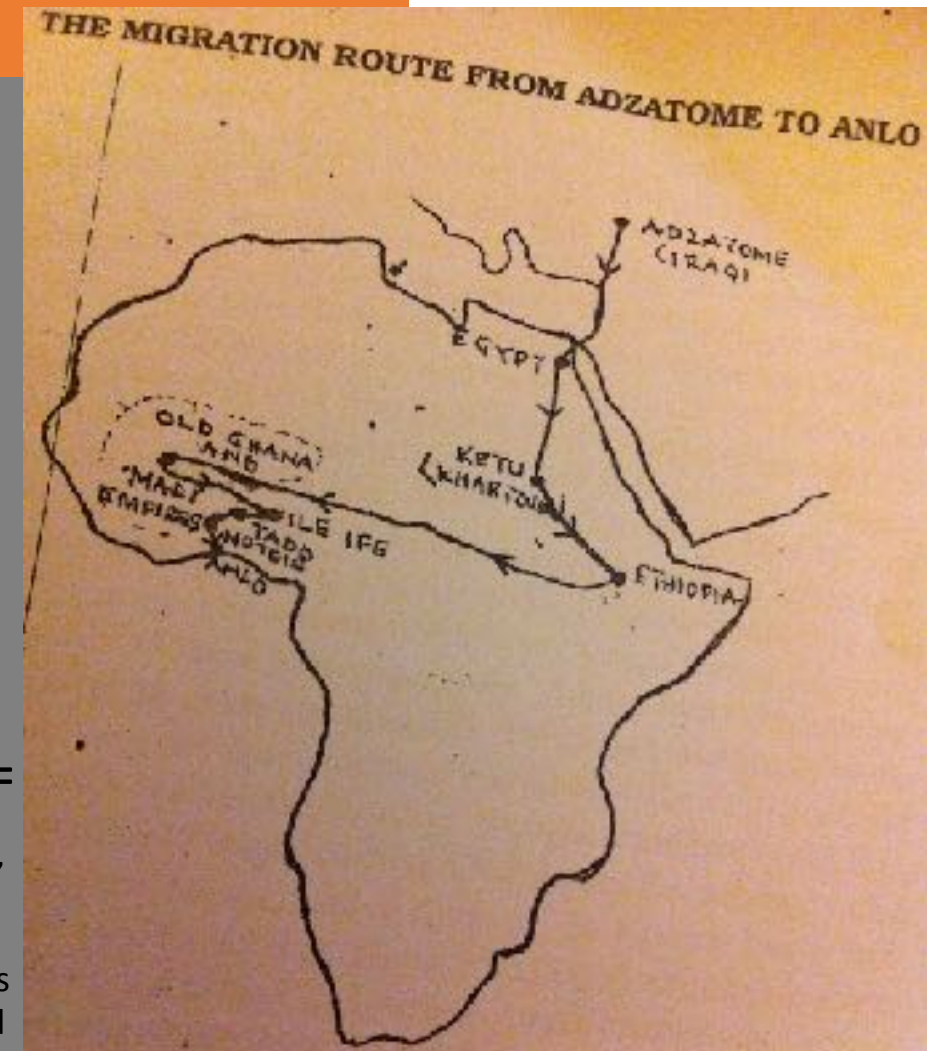
# Working with Chiefs

The Ewe Paramount Chief,  
Togbui Agokoli, IV



# THE EWE TRIBE: Fascinating Oral Tradition

- Ewes (Eweawo) means the children or descendants of Eve, the second person created by God. In Ewe, Eve means Two or second and Adam = Adanu meaning Wisdom ((Agbotadua, 2003, p. 16)
- The expression *Nɔvinye deka abe Eve ene* = “My only brother/sister like Eve.”
- Yesu = the One who is complete, whole and without fault or blemish and
- Kliso in Ewe = “The one who runs into God.” Kli = “runs into a person or a thing” and ‘So’ = God. So the name Yesu Kliso = “The perfect one who saw or Knew God face to face” (Agbotadua, 2003, p. 16).
- The Ewes came to Egypt under their leader Gu because of the same famine which brought Jacob and his family but settled at the delta of the river Nile (present day Egypt). When the Egyptian Empire collapsed they migrated to Sudan under their leader Mi... to Ketu (Khartoum) to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) under Ago. From here to the bend of River Niger and the middles reaches of river Senegal (Agbotadua 2003, p. 18).



# Notsie: Ewes' Spiritual & Historical Home

## Settlement in Nigeria, Benin, & Togo

- On the disintegration of the Mali Empire, the Ewes moved south-eastwards following the Niger river to Nigeria (Ile Ife) at Oyo.
- With the Fall of Oyo, the Ewes moved to Dahomey (Benin) where they split into 3 groups: Tado, Notsie, and Dahomey.
- After a while they moved to Togo, Notsie. From here they were ruled by kings.
- ❖ The most popular was Agokoli because of his development or expansion of the Kingdom but his cruelty culminated in the forced exodus from Notsie



# EWE: ALL ABOUT LEADERSHIP

## THE FOUNDING OF EWETO (Ewe Nation)

1. Selection of *Ametsitsi Kaletɔwo siwo seɲu le gbɔgbɔme*
2. *Go & Do explorations*: running water/river. Fertility of the ground. Refuge in war times
3. Perform rituals
4. Covenant with powers in the territory
5. Plant a tree (Ablɔmeti)
6. People can now go and secure their plots

## Inherited Leadership

- **Fia (Omanhehe)** = King: All powerful  
You don't talk directly to a king nor look into his face. You call him by name so you say "Tɔgbui."

# King's Immediate Team (Fia ntimewo

## 1. Titinaɖafia

(Aɖɔtrihene): Aɖangɔgbea / aɖadada.

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> person in ranking, the closest to the King = General of wars.
- He does not live in the same quartier or town like the Omanhehe.
- Omanhehe does not do anything without him knowing or his approval

3. **Dusiɖafia / Nifahene** 'Nifa' = right and 'hene' = king. He acts interim when the paramount king (fiaga) and Titinavafia are absent

4. **Miaɖafia / Benkumhene**  
Benkum = left.

## 5. **Dzasihene (Dzogbɔnɔfia / Amedzrowɔfia**

In charge of official hospitality. Does not go to war but stays in king's palace during war. The king can ask him to take supplies to war general. and can be sent to war general.

6. **Dunɔudzɔla / Tsriddɔmhene.** His role is to protect the paramount's city in time of war in case the king has to relocate with his fiazikpi

# King's Government: Fiahawo

- 1. **Fiatɔ**: King's first advisor.

He is a proven wise and knowledgeable elder. Suggests deep thoughts to the king.

- 2. **Tsiami**: The tongue of the King.

Has a scepter he carries along when the king sends him.

- 3. **Omankrado/ Asafohene**: Asafo (dumeviwo). Not only is he a brilliant advisor to the king but has some rights

- ❖ represents the people before the king.
- ❖ Every citizen can go to him with any case.
- ❖ He is enthroned like a king and has a Zikpi.
- ❖ Leader of all the youth together with Asafoatsye (Hunua/Sohɛfia)
- ❖ Can call on meetings and discuss issues regarding the progress of the tribe/town/city

- 4. **Sāmefia** = King of Sawo/To.

He represents his clan before the king.

- 5. **Nyɔnufia**: Queen/leader of women chosen by women:

Settles female issues, in charge of public hygiene, child care and hygiene.

NB. She also has Women Government just like men do.

Assists the Tridɔmhene in times of war and in charge of protecting elderly, women and children while men are at war.

# Other Leaders

- Ɖugãfola (Atumpani)
- Brafowo (Atsyɔŋfowo)
- Abu (Fia fe dɔtsɔla)
- Kpekula
- Dzoyatsɔla (keeps umbrella open on king everywhere the king is)
- Kpodola/Gafola: in charge of information

## ❖ Leadership Structure

1. Tribal King
2. Clan kings
3. Canton Chiefs (brought in by colonization)
4. Village chiefs (ga)
5. Family chiefs
6. House Heads

## ❖ Organizational Structure

- Fia Kɔme
- Asafo Kɔme
- Dutɔ Kɔme
- Sohɛ Fia Kɔme
- Nynu Fia Kɔme
- Dumetɔwo (in 3 groups):

**Societal Structure** (Obianim, 1990, p. 9-

**A. Fiahawo:** Fia, asafohenewo, tsiami, and all the fia ntimewo

**A. Kesinɔtɔwo:** has a lot or people (Kluviwo, kosiwo, awubamewo, etc. Kluviwo & Kosiwo are money bought. Awubamewo are people who owe the kesinoto a huge some of debt and could not pay it back. So he or his family decides he works for the person as long as the person intends.

**C. Dumetɔwo (in 3 groups):**

1. Nutsuwo (asafo/sohɛwo)
2. Nyonuwo
3. Deviwo



# Choosing a king/Chief

- Becoming a chief is not a personal decision
- Always appointed after a king/chief dies
- Regent is appointed (chief of the Royal Family)
- Royal family (customary council) has to process, examine and choose a potential candidate
- Seeks Dutɔ's approval
- Seek ancestral approval or confirmation through divination (Fa)

• Togbui Zounmagba II argued that *Fa s'utilise pour determiner ce qu'il y a, ce qui viendra et ce qui a ete. Autrement dit, le present, le passe et le futur.*

## Steps

- Being kidnapped
- Secret Room
- Going to the Desert
- **Christian Enthronement**
- Public Presentation
- Official Decree Reception
- Speech
- Authorization to Rule
- Form your cabinet and government

# Canton Chiefs

Tg. Dzidzoli



Senior Civil Engineer,  
Tg. Chaold III



Law Grad.  
Tg. Semekonon II



Medical Ast. Tg. Toyo III



Topographer & Banking Student, Tg. Tonou IV

# Village Chiefs

Retired Senior Acct.  
Toulassi I



TV & radio  
Presenter,  
Tg. Awahotou



# Lolan Kingdom, Since 1821



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## Civil Division

1. Supreme Head of State: Awɔmefia (King of Kings)
2. Civilian Heads (Sub-kings): Dufiawo, Fiawo, Tefiawo (Divisional Chiefs, Sub-Chiefs).

## Military Division

1. Field Marshal: Aɖadada
2. Generals (Great War Leaders or War Lords): Aɖakplolagãwo, Aɖafiawo
3. Captains (War Leaders): Aɖakplɔlawo
4. Lieutenants or deputy war heads: Agbotaduawo, Ngɔgbeawo.

## Social Division

1. Headmen: Hanuawo
2. Elders (Elder Statesmen): Dumegãwo (Mamattah, 1976, p. 241)

- Village Chief (Ga)
- Komega
- Gavi (an aspiring Ga)

- Historically, particularly in the Lolan kingdom, there was a series of 'ga' (chiefs) in charge of diverse sectors of activities of the social and economic life:
- *Akloga (Boat director)* from 'Aklo' (boat) and 'ga' leader: He is both chief of inland water shipping and war flotilla
- *Asiga (Market director)* from 'Asi' (market): in charge of the smooth running and maintenance of market places, to collect taxes and organize fair days in diverse localities under their jurisdiction
- *Agboga (Gate Director)* from 'Agbo' (gate): he is the urban police in charge of detecting any/every attack that might come from outside.
- *Aputaga (Beach Director)* from 'Apu' (Sea), 'Ta' (side): chief of beach, in charge of the relations between the foreign traders and the royal power. He collects taxes and coutumes (aputanu "dues of beach," or anyigbanu "dues of earth") on behalf of the king and organizes the external trade of the kingdom. This key-office requires a great faithfulness to the royal cause for it helps the nominee to become quickly rich; thus, power, from the dues/gifts of local and foreign traders who are conscious of carefully handling peaceful ties with local authorities in order to make good benefits.
- *Dêga (Border Chief or chief custom)* from 'Dê' (border): Custom posts were erected on all the roads and waterways leading to the kingdom where traders going to the different markets of the agglomeration pay taxes (Westermann, 1935, p. 214). On each pirogue of goods, "the customs collect a tax of 100 cowries" (ibid). The following chart gives an idea of the corresponding monetary values.
- *K'ɔmega* are chiefs quarters (p. 146)
- *Kotaga* (family chief).
- *Homega* (concession chief).

# After Colonizations: Two Types of Kings

• **Awɔmefia /Mawufia**  
The king of God Mawu  
(xɔmefia).

His title is nominal. He  
reigns but does not  
govern.

*Le chef n'est jamais devant. Il laisse son 'tsami' et ses  
'dumegãwo' prendre le devant (Adabra, 2012, p. 285).*

• **Yovofia** (Chief)

➤ With German Colonization.

Can be retained and publically beaten (One for Kaiser) (Adabra, 2012, p. 283) until his village does the chores

➤ **French Colonization (Chefs).** No more King but chiefs. Village chiefs served as:

1. General police (public order in the village)
2. Rural police (protection of colonial farms, harvests and nurseries)
3. Taking care of streets and paths
4. Public health
5. Justice
6. Tax collection

NB. To better control the village chiefs, cantons were created with Canton chiefs (chief of villages chiefs)

His basic role was to transfer to VCs the orders from above and ensures they are done. Benefit: Longevity (Adabra, p. 291)



# Innovative Leadership



# Unexpected Encounter & Discovery

**Locoh Dosseh Simplicie**, Principal of my  
Primary School



**Le Grand Livre du Palais, 7kgs**



# Dining with Chief Dzidzoli Detu X

## Chief & Wife



