

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Ewe, Niger-Congo. Also known as Ebwe, Efe, Eibe, Eue, Eve, Gbe, Krepe, Krepi, Popo, Vhe (1).

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): EWE (1).

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): Latitude:8 and Longitude 1 (googlemaps). Found in Ghana, Togo, and Benin (2).

1.4 Brief history: Oral tradition states that they are originally from East of the Niger river, then travelled to Notsie, where KingAdela Atogble of Notsie was hospitable to them. His successor later treated them very badly and is told to have killed all of the elderly men and women to keep the Ewe from knowing their history. The story continues that they managed to save one man, and then left Notsie along different paths, which became the different clans. (2)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors: Missionaries had some affect on the religion of the Ewe (4).

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): The area contains forests, lagoons, and planes (3).

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Each clan is composed of kin (4). More than 1.5 living in Togo, .5 million in Benin, and 2 million in Ghana (3).

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): The Ewe, especially the women, eat clay that is edible (6). The Ewe drink a lot of beer, as clean drinking water is hard to come by (7). Cocoa (8).

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: Onions, called sabala, is a large staple in the Ewe diet (4).

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

2.4 Food storage: The edible clay is soaked in water to rid it of particles and rust, beforehand, it is stored as dry shale. (6).

2.5 Sexual division of production: Children collect baskets of shale, Men mine shales and women sell them. Women and children also make the shale into the edible clay (6).

2.6 Land tenure: The Ewe's main staple is onions (sabala) (4). Irrigation is necessary to grow this crop (4).

2.7 Ceramics: Ceramics used for food storage and art (9).

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: Sharing is done via kinship rules, ie mostly within clans, where kin lives together (4).

2.9 Food taboos: There are rituals during planting done to help prevent molding or fungus on the onion crops (4).

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? The Ewe have some fishing villages, and therefore need watercraft. (7)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

4.3 Completed family size (m and f): Women generally have around 6 children (5).

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): It seems to be every few years (8).

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Females first marry, quite often, in their infancy (5), men

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: Due to the polygamous lifestyle and nomadic tendencies, I would imagine it being very low.

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: Men especially marry more than once. Women can marry multiple times as well (5).

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Traditionally, brides receive gifts from her groom (8).

4.9 Inheritance patterns: Through the male line (5), agnatic descent (5).

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Parents and offspring get along, the children learn from the parents (6).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): Endogamy (5).

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers"

recognized? Fathers are who the women are married to, there is no partible paternity (8).

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")?

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? No mention of this.

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape? None

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)? Within the same clan, even village, and often within the same lineage as well (5).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? To a degree. Females have an option of marrying more than once (5).

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring. Men give gifts to their brides (8).

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females A man may have on average 3 or 4 wives, so .35

4.22 Evidence for couvades? None

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older) None

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? Great kin relationships, especially for the elderly (8).

4.24 Joking relationships?

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations Patrilineal (2), agnatic descent (5).

4.26 Incest avoidance rules Rules allow for within village, but not incest (5).

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? There is a formal marriage ceremony with lots of noise and dancing (8).

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? Children obtain their names from the father (5).

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

Both genders generally marry within the village, however, outside of the village is not unheard of (5).

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Parents generally arrange the marriages (5).

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: Marriages within villages are preferred (5).

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: The Ewe seem to have little to no violence related deaths.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: The Ewe seem to have little to no violence related deaths.

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing: The Ewe seem to have little to no violence related deaths.

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations): The Ewe are generally on good terms with their neighbors (8).

4.18 Cannibalism? There is no mention of Cannibalism.

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: Close to 300 (7).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): "the Ewe... travel frequently" (7).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes): Clans “defined in relation to a common male ancestor” (2).

5.4 Post marital residence: The woman who was the example in (7) is said to have travelled around until she had her 5, 6, and 7th children, where she then stayed at home, as the third wife to her husband (7).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): There are set boundaries, however the Ewe travel a lot (8).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): There are customs which lay out which ages have which jobs (generally) (7); however, there seems to be no set divisions.

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: Money is often lent to family members from richer members (8).

5.8 Village and house organization:

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc: “Collective ownership of property” within each clan (2). Also, each clan is capable of tracing their ancestry back to a common ancestor. (2)

5.12 Trade: The Ewe trade the edible clay and other resources (5).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Some indications, yes, based on liniages (5).

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR: Religion seems to be very important to the Ewe, with ceremonies for many of the most important aspects of their life like agriculture and how their lives occur (4).

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): There are some deities (4).

6.2 Stimulants: Eye (the edible clay) may have some psycho-effect, however it is not commonly associated with religion (6). They go into trances when dancing (7).

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): "Newborn males are circumcised and named on the seventh day after being born, whereas newborn girls have their ears pierced and are also named on the seventh day after their birth." (2)

6.4 Other rituals: There are many rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations related to the Trowo (see 6.13) (2), some of the more important include divination sessions, initiation ceremonies, etc (2).

6.5 Myths (Creation): Maw created the world and everything in it (2).

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games): There are carved figurines related to the Trowo (see 6.13), and other ritual objects (2), there are also drums that are played at certain ceremonies and costumes as well (2).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR: Little to none. Both men and women are priests (7).

6.8 Missionary effect: During the time of European colonialism, there was some attempt to convert to monotheistic christian religion. (4).

6.9 RCR revival: After some christian missionary effect, the Ewe Incorporated some of the beliefs into

their own (4).

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs: “a person's spirit (or djoto) will come back in the next child born into the lineage” (2). “The Ewe believe that the physical and spiritual worlds mirror each other, and are, therefore, similar” (2) Funerals are considered extremely important, consist of events that last around a month, and involve drumming and dancing all night long. (2). Death is the most important moment in a person’s life (2)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? No; in Vudo practice, sometimes the dead are named (7).

6.12 Is there teknonymy? There is no mention of referring to adults by the names of their children in any of the ethnographies.

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.) “The Ewe believe in an androgynous supreme God, whom they call Mawuga Kitikana, or simply Maw” (2). Maw is venerated through lesser divinities called Trowo. (2) Maw is the mother and father of all Trowo (2). There is evidence of belief in witchcraft (4). There is some use of voodoo (7). Intense ancestor worship including dancing to channel the ancestors (7)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: None (9)

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut: Short, close to the scalp for men, longer for women. (9)

7.4 Scarification: None (9)

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.): Some beads and jewelry; necklaces, bracelets, etc (9)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment: There is no mention of anything special.

7.7 Sex differences in adornment: Women wear textiles on their heads (9).

7.8 Missionary effect: Missionaries had some affect on the religion of the Ewe (4).

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system: Descent is tracked through the male line, so via fathers (5).

8.2 Sororate, levirate: Neither is mentioned.

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): None noted.

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them): Stools are particularly important because they are often carved with great care and provide a rich narrative about the clan in question. Furthermore, during rituals, the clan stool serves as the place to which ancestral spirits may be called. (2)

The Hogbetstoto Za celebrates every year the exocus from Notsie (2).

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Online publication date: 1-Sep-2009.

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