

Talking with  
Ewe Seine Fishermen and Shallot Farmers

Recording and editing by

Polly Hill



CAMBRIDGE AFRICAN MONOGRAPHS 6

Talking with

Ewe Seine Fishermen and Shallot Farmers



Carrying the seine-bag

Talking with  
Ewe Seine Fishermen and Shallot Farmers

Recording and editing by

Polly Hill

CAMBRIDGE AFRICAN MONOGRAPHS 6



© African Studies Centre, Cambridge 1986

The African Studies Centre was founded in July 1965 to facilitate interdisciplinary research and teaching in modern African studies in Cambridge. The Centre publishes the Cambridge African Monograph Series and the Cambridge Occasional Papers. The aim of these series is to make available occasional research reports, seminar papers, conference proceedings and bibliographies relating to African Studies.

Polly Hill (who has been a fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, since 1965) was a Research Fellow at the University of Ghana from 1954 to 1965, being a full time fieldworker throughout that time; she subsequently did fieldwork in rural Hausaland (Nigeria) in 1966, 1967 and 1971-2 and in rural south India (Karnataka 1977-8 and Kerala 1982). The first of her six books to be published by the Cambridge University Press was *The Migrant Cocoa-Farmers of Southern Ghana* (1963), the most recent being *Development Economics on Trial: the Anthropological Case for a Prosecution* (1986); two other books (1972 and 1977) relate to rural Hausaland, and one (1982) is a comparison of villages in Karnataka and Hausaland. She has written other books and monographs as well as numerous articles. She was Reader in Commonwealth Studies, Cambridge University, from 1973 to 1979, and has been a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellow.

A.T. Grove  
Director  
African Studies Centre

#### British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Hill, Polly

Talking with Ewe seine fishermen and  
shallot farmers

1. Farmers — Ghana — Social conditions

2. Fishers — Ghana — Social conditions

I. Title

305.9'63

S473.G42E9/

ISBN 0-902993-17-8

## CONTENTS

### I. Ewe Seine Fishermen

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                 | 7  |
| Summarized Oral Material     | 12 |
| A Fishing Gear Shop in Accra | 39 |

### II. Ewe Shallot Farming

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Introduction             | 40 |
| Summarized Oral Material | 42 |

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| Classified Ewe Glossary | 51 |
| Bibliography            | 57 |
| Map                     | 59 |
| Photographs             |    |
| Index                   | 61 |

# I: Ewe Seine Fishermen

## Introduction

In April 1963 (when I was attached to the African Studies Centre at the University of Ghana) I went to Keta and Anloga in south-eastern Ghana (see map p.59), with the intention of studying the socio-economic organization of shallot farming there, a very interesting subject since, as is well known, this cultivation, which was developed without the assistance of the Gold Coast Department of Agriculture, is among the most intensive in the world. Immediately I arrived I was so lucky as to meet Mr Felix Hukporti of Keta, a one-time secretary of a seine fishing company, who was prepared to act as my assistant and interpreter; I soon became so fascinated by his first-hand information on beach-seining that my primary interest switched from shallot farming to fishing. After spending about a week in Keta, I decided to return in May for about a fortnight for the purpose of studying the organization of beach-seining; my hope of returning there later that year was dashed by the disastrous floods of October and November when Keta's only road link with the wider world was severed - not, indeed, for the first time, serious coastal erosion being an ancient problem. (In 1984 a far worse calamity occurred, a great many houses in Keta and neighbouring towns to the east having been destroyed by the sea.)

Since my work on seine-fishing was undertaken so quickly, it is fortunate that I have two sound reasons for having much confidence in my findings. First, these findings are in line with those of M. Albert de Surgy who undertook a much more thorough survey in 1965 (see bibliography and also Hill (1970: pp.30-31)); second, Mr Hukporti was so knowledgeable and well known, and so sensitive an interpreter, that the opaque veil which interpretation so often interposes seemed almost lacking - and I was welcome wherever I went.

The summarized oral material which forms the bulk of this monograph is based on Mr Hukporti's interpretive work. In order to enhance readability it is a mixture of direct and indirect speech (mainly the latter), with occasional asides from myself which may either explain what is being said or set the scene - where appropriate these observations are in square brackets. This form of presentation is particularly designed to enable the reader to appreciate the diversity of organizational systems adopted by individual owners of seine nets, within the general framework of Ewe seine fishing, as well as to take

advantage of the exceptionally high quality of Mr Hukporti's interpretation from the Ewe - hardly any of the fishermen spoke English. While the material is much condensed, readers will appreciate that a degree of repetition is as desirable as it is unavoidable. No individual net owner, or other person in authority, can expatiate on *the* organization of Ewe seine fishing, but only on the system (or occasionally systems) familiar to him - a system which he may well idealize. I hope that this method of presenting my findings in conversational form will illustrate the hopelessness of any search for detailed uniformity amid so much diversity. Not everyone is to be either believed or disbelieved.

My only significant publication on the Ewe seine fishermen is a 23-page chapter in Hill (1970). As that book is now out of print, readers of this monograph may be glad to know that my chapter includes no material on the organization of Ewe beach-seining which is not repeated here: in other words, the present work is an expansion of the original chapter, in a different form. On the other hand, I do not here include a description of the homeland of the Ewe seine fishermen, which has been dealt with in countless publications including Chisholm (1983), and which is so remarkable that it features in virtually every geographical textbook relating to Ghana. The home beaches from which the nets are operated run eastwards from the estuary of the Volta river in Ghana through to Lome, the capital of Togo. The members of the companies which operate the nets live both on the long sand spit bordering the ocean which lies to the south-east of the shallow Keta Lagoon (this spit is in places no wider than the road it carries), as well as in certain towns and villages to the north of the lagoons. The density of population on the sand spit is possibly uniquely high within the West African rural context.

As an introduction to the oral material which follows I now briefly summarize the main features of the Ewe seine fishermen's organizational system. In doing so I take it for granted that readers are aware that seine nets date back to Biblical times and are wide-spread in the world; and that beach-seining depends on the work of large groups of well-organized men, whose main job is to haul ashore the two long wings of the net which trap the fish, driving them into the bag at the end. The Ewe seine net is not a species of indigenous technology: known as *yevudor* (literally European net) it was presumably originally a copy of a European-owned net, possibly a type which was first introduced by the Portuguese in the region of Congo and Angola. In 1963 the nets, with their attached hauling ropes, which might have been up to half a mile long, were cast in the ocean from dug out canoes; paddles were then in use, but soon afterwards outboard motors became common.

Since large seine nets made of nylon (which began to replace cotton shortly before 1963) were worth several thousand £s in 1963 and were invariably owned by individuals, not by sets of kin or other groups, we are here involved in a study of a type of individual enterprise which involved much finance, as well as great riskiness - nets are constantly damaged, huge expenses often being incurred in their repair. Certainly the 'big capitalist', who is always known as a net owner (*doto*), commonly shows a remarkable capacity for delegating responsibility to others; but this in no wise affects his position as *the* financier, who is rewarded by a share of the (net) proceeds (after deducting expenses) from selling the fish. Probably the majority of net owners are net owners' sons who have inherited their nets. When net owners die all their nets pass to one of their sons, for division of fishing gear on death never occurs. Many net owners own only one net; many own several, say two, three or four; there are a few owners of large numbers of nets, say ten or even more.

Every net owner needs to be backed up by a capital fund (*agbadoho*) from which his expenses may be drawn. The degree to which the net and the fund were integrally related, both (as we shall see) being partly conceptual, was indeed absorbing, in both its reality and its elusiveness. De Surgy has this to say on *agbadoho* -

"So we are faced with an original system, wholly African, which has the advantages of being communal but which does not reject the notion of profit and gives expression to the formation of capital. We cannot sufficiently underline the extreme interest this holds, in conditions of quasi-industrial production, for it permits neither the exploitation of man by man nor his alienation from his unbounded ambition."

de Surgy (1966); 128-9 (my translation)

The possible justification for de Surgy's use of *communal* in relation to *agbadoho* arises from the fact that men other than the net owner are commonly in charge of the fund; it is also associated with the fact that the *company*, viz. the group of men which actually operates the net, often effectively borrows from the fund.

There are many reasons why net owners commonly appoint another man to operate one or more of their nets: these include old age or decrepitude, ownership of several nets, reluctance to migrate, the pull of alternative occupations and the wish to develop the responsibility of a son. Such a man is usually known as a *bosun*; he is the head of the company which operates the

net.

*Companies* (the word is used by Ewe speakers) are large groups of non-kin; they consist of men who are recruited for a mere 'season' or period of months during which the net is in active use and never persist over a longer period, except possibly when distant migration is involved - see p.20. (See p.53 below for a list of the functions of some of the most prominent members, much the most important of whom, apart from the bosun, being the secretary who keeps many written records.) In 1963 it had recently become usual for net owners to make fairly large cash advances to company members on their recruitment, the money being repayable from the members' earnings which are received at the end of the fishing season.

Successful beach-seining requires dedicated team work as is recognised by the fact that each company member has a stake in the value of the (net) proceeds (after meeting expenses) of the catch. (This dependence on the value of the catch is an almost universal feature of fisheries throughout the world.) As is made abundantly clear below, there is no standard system of division of the (net) value of the catch between the various participants, as has sometimes been reported. It is usual for the net owner, or his deputy, to agree the principles of division with the members before the season starts. The division is invariably conceptualised in terms of 'shares', or 'parts', and at least one share always accrues to 'the net' - i.e. to the net owner. Thus, in the case presented on p.13 below, 3 out of 9 parts went to the net owner (who also happened to be the canoe owner), one part went to the crew members who went to sea, and so forth. Actually, systems of division of the season's catch should be thought of as involving partial accounting, for there are not only 'dashes' of fish to many kinds of people, but there is need to finance the company's daily living expenses from the current proceeds of fish-selling.

Women are entirely responsible for preserving and selling the fish. A large proportion of the catch is apt to be sold by the so-called 'wives' of company members, each company member being entitled to appoint at least one woman, who may or may not be his actual wife, for this work. In a sense these women (who are of the company, but not of it) are company banks for they commonly do not pay for their fish when they receive it, and may usually make use of their takings in whatever manner they wish, for instance in trading on their own account, until they are called on to redeem the sum owing. But when companies travel to distant beaches, as they frequently do, some fish is usually sold to independent local women fish traders, to assuage their envy of the strangers.



The dangers of over-fishing from the Ewe (Anlo) beach have been obvious enough for many decades. It seems that in 1963 the seine fishermen had been migrating in search of richer waters and fish-markets for over seventy years, having travelled to beaches running from Sierra Leone in the north to the Congo river in the south; during their long sojourns on distant beaches the Ewe had instructed many other peoples in the use of their gear. There had been great concentrations at Lagos, along the Dahomey (now Benin) and Togo coasts, and probably most notably of all near Abidjan in the Ivory Coast. As for the more southerly coasts, earlier migrations to the French Congo were mentioned, one such adventure being commemorated by a house named 'Congo Villa' in Keta. Considering that a large company may have had 80 or more members, the costs of financing such expeditions might have been very great; formerly the fishermen were wont to carry their canoes and other gear to the distant beaches by 'steamer'; nowadays the company elders sometimes fly there.

If a net owner lacks capital (but seldom otherwise) he may let out his net to someone else on a system known as *mavee*, such that the (net) proceeds from selling the fish are divided equally between the net owner and the hirer (and his company). Under *mavee* deductible expenses do not include the cost of net repairs during the season, which are met by the net owner himself and not by the company as is normally the rule. Women net owners, of whom there are a few, are among those who let out their nets under this risky system, sometimes on a daily basis. Although *mavee* is usually temporary, net owners and hirers are occasionally so satisfied with their relationship that it persists indefinitely.

Formerly, portions of net, made from local cotton, were netted by hand and laced together into a whole. That nets still grow and develop, rather than suddenly coming into existence as entire new objects, throws much light on capital formation. A net being a form of 'knitted capital', which may be made from secondhand or discarded raw material, little cash for its creation may be required initially, though the introduction of nylon netting enhanced the significance of 'big finance'. Thus it is that the physical capital and the fund to sustain it may grow simultaneously from small beginnings. Thus it is, also, that those possessed of significant capital sums (derived, perhaps, in the old days, from rubber trading) could go ahead fast investing the proceeds of one good net in the acquisition of others. Thus it is, finally, that nets are often regarded as a perpetual, non-vanishing form of property, analogous to inherited land.

## Summarized Oral Material

In presenting the following summarized oral material, based on unstructured conversations with fishermen, I have taken the liberty in almost all cases of providing actual names; I think that my kind and tolerant informants would prefer this, despite the unavoidable inaccuracies which slip into work of this kind for all sorts of very good reasons.

9th April, 1963. *Zaglago Gbede*, the Chief Fisherman of Keta town, reckons he was born in 1880 and that he has been the Chief for thirty years. All the time we are sitting here he is mending, or possibly making, a piece of net, being surrounded by ducks, noisy children and sand.

In his father's day he used only small nets. It was about forty years ago [longer?] that two kinds of big net were introduced here: the seine and the *ali* - [the latter being a kind of net wall, suspended by floats, held vertical by leads, which can be anchored in sea or lagoon and left for a day or so.]

It was not until after 1918 that he went fishing at 'Abidjan' [meaning beaches near Abidjan in the Ivory Coast]. The crew was from here and they either paddled the canoes to Lome or put them on a lorry for Accra for loading on a steamer there. In the old days there were no big advances to company members as there are now, 'just small dashes to leave with an old lady'. Sometimes 30 men and 20 women would travel together and they would usually be away in the Ivory Coast for some two years. If you didn't look after a man properly he left you and joined someone else; if a man left suddenly you worked out the number of days he had been with you before paying him. As the canoe owner had the 'passport', men had to apply to leave. In those days such distant migration was uncommon; he himself more often went for six months, or so, to Dahomey and Togo.

His father used to divide the (net) proceeds from selling the fish into 7 parts, of which 3 parts were for the net owner, the remainder for everyone else. Small boys who were crew members got half the rates of grown men. Traditionally, there was always a clerk or secretary, who was a relatively better educated man. One man fills the fish baskets; one man collects the money from the women; and one (the clerk) records the transactions. The system of not booking the smaller catches and using them for running expenses is traditional.



10th April. Living in a pink storey-house in Kedzi [presumably since overwhelmed by the sea] is an old net owner, who remembers the old days when stones, corn and beans were used for accounting purposes. On the house the following inscription commemorates his father:

### GIDIGLO SEWORNU

The inventor of *wawa*<sup>1</sup> fishing net

“While toiling in the night  
the others were fast asleep.”<sup>2</sup>

The present net owner was the one who used to take his father's canoes to distant places in Togo and Dahomey, and was later able to buy his own net and canoe from his profits. ‘When a son is reliable his father may give him a net - and then, somehow, he has to get a canoe.’ ‘When a father dies it is better for one son to run the business’, but his paternal nephews often work in his company.

Referring to the *mavee* system, he says this is new, having been learnt from the shallot farmers quite recently. ‘Cast a net today, get £20 fish, then the owner gets £10, the hirer £10 - the owner meeting the cost of repairs.’ A document records the agreement. The owner has a representative, himself a crew member, who checks the value of the catch. *Mavee* applies to canoes as well as to nets. Another way of letting out a net is simply to allow someone else to form his own company, the net getting its customary shares of the proceeds.

At present 3 of his 4 canoes are at a Togo beach with his brother who is the bosun. He regards his system of division of the proceeds as traditional - anyway, he says it was employed by his father and grandfather. It involves division into 9 parts, as follows:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| canoe and net              | 3 |
| crew members who go to sea | 1 |
| other active members       | 1 |

---

<sup>1</sup> I was later told that this was wrong and that he had invented the *afafa* (or *fafado*) net - the largest seine net for catching *fafa*.

<sup>2</sup> Rough translation from the Ewe.

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| regular net menders <sup>+</sup> | 1 |
| whole company <sup>++</sup>      | 3 |

- + casual net menders may be rewarded with fish on the spot  
 ++ this is shared between the members by the bosun

His view of the attached women is familiar. In his case each woman keeps her takings until the season is over, and then hands what she owes to the secretary; She may even use the money to buy fish from other fishing companies for resale at a profit. The net owner does not necessarily know how many women are attached. Some fish is always sold to non-attached women.

10th April. *Kwasi Koblavi*, who is said to be two weeks younger than the Chief Fisherman (p.12 above), is asleep or unaware of his surroundings. We talk to his wife and then to his (real) brother Mr Hukporti, who is the uncle of my assistant Felix Hukporti. We ask him about accounting in earlier times. He says that pebbles of different sizes represented different denominations, £1, 1s. 6d., 3d., 1d., which were familiar to all company members; and that there was a special box with compartments for different denominations. They used to check the accounts weekly even though 'in the old days every fisherman had a retentive memory'. (Although this system is now obsolete, if fish is sold on credit (say) to someone in Accra, stones etc. might be wrapped in pieces of cloth to signify the sum owing; thus a bean might represent £1, a grain of corn 6d.) There were clever fishermen who used charcoal to keep more permanent accounts, by writing on a wall. All the food for the company was paid for from money received from stranger fishmongers who, unlike the 'wives', paid cash at the time of purchase. As for the wives, each one of them is a kind of bank, the money being dispersed between them for security. (Yes: a 'wife' is someone who is attached to one member of the company, but she doesn't actually need to be married to him.)

Now Mr Hukporti owns nets and one canoe. The gear is kept permanently at a beach in Dahomey, where a local man (a 'landlord') is in charge. The bosun is his brother's son; he is responsible for dividing the net takings into 9 parts, 3 for the net owner, one for the net-menders and 5 to be shared between the company members. The bosun looks after the money and keeps it in his house when he is at home; he himself, being an old man, only sees the accounts. He knows very well that different net owners have different systems of dividing the proceeds, but he doesn't know why.

As for the division of the 5 parts between the company members (which is the responsibility of the bosun), his constant refrain is that 'division

is according to activities', meaning that account is taken of the type of work as well as of the numbers of days worked and general keenness. Before dividing the proceeds they deduct all expenses; if a new net is required while the company is away this is an expense; other expenses include net mending, corks, leads, net weaving needles, transport, cost of constructing beach houses, etc., etc.

Formerly they used to spend some 6 or 7 months in Dahomey; as it is now more likely to be 5 months from November, so his bosun is about to return home. The old man's wife says that they originally migrated to Grand Popo in Dahomey; they sailed away from here and even left their gear there for as long as twelve years, returning home periodically. Each of their three boats had a 9-man crew, and there were 40 men altogether, including rope-haulers. She was one of about 10 women, some of whom had children with them.

6th May. On the Zongo beach at Keta we see the distribution of the catch from a seine net, which consists of *deyi* (very small 'sardines'), being divided into two piles, one (the smaller) for the outside women, the other for the wives. (This, says Mr Hukporti, is usual, though if the catch is very small there may be none for the wives, the whole having to be sold to finance the purchase of food for company members.) The outsiders buy for cash, the wives on credit. Today the bosun is dividing the catch - sometimes it is the secretary. Company members and other helpers get dashes of fish, and before the distribution starts certain women who cook for the company get fish. The price today is 9s per greatly-overfilled basket. [The principle of overfilling, with the excess falling into a bigger surrounding basket, is not clear, though it resembles the practice of many market women.] The women look dissatisfied with the price. The bosun is doing his work very seriously; he is resolute though very tired; he is still wet from the sea.

6th May. At Ketu beach, slightly east of Kedzi, Mr Hukporti and I watch the hauling in of a large *yevudor*, which has made an average catch, worth some £75 to £80 according to Hukporti's estimation; the haul mainly consists of very small fish (*deyi*), but there are a few much bigger fish mixed in. Much seaweed is entangled with the fish, necessitating laborious sorting. The fish are placed in big metal basins, jelly fish and other rubbish being discarded. As the bosun has not yet arrived, a net fence is erected round the sorting area. The men went to sea about 7 a.m. and the catch was beached about 3.15 p.m. But they have not been hauling the ropes all this time: 'pull and rest, pull and rest'. A man blows a whistle while they pull. (If the net is left at sea too long some of the fish may escape.)

A great many men were swimming in the sea prior to the beaching of the catch, making sure that all went well. A large glass buoy, encased in rope, marks the end of the bag. Another much smaller seine net operates around the big one to catch any escaping fish; this lands a small catch, but presumably one which is worth while.

A swimmer signals that the seaweed is entering the net as the catch nears the shore; the two wings of the net are crossed in an effort to prevent this.

The fish are all alive when the bag is beached; they shimmer like quicksilver or moving water, a few of the tiny ones jumping through the mesh; the bigger fish struggle hopelessly.

The scene on the beach is very orderly and many women wait patiently while the seaweed sorting is in progress.

6th May. *Amgdzi*, who appears to be about 75 years old, is the owner of a storey-house on the lagoon side of the road at Kedzi, in front of which stands a large monument to his late father. Long ago his father, Hanyabui, had been a dealer in rubber in Togo: 'he made me to understand that he started rubber with his own money'. He might have employed some 10 men to carry the rubber from the collecting area to Keta, where it was sold. He died in about 1934 and is buried under the huge monument [now doubtless destroyed by the sea]. The first fishing net he made was of native cotton; there was no name at that time for this very small net, which was cast in the sea and drawn. [Similar nets, *agutsido*, are made today for lagoon fishing, from imported cotton.] By 1914, 'when the Germans ran away', his father had started using a seine net, which they had 'woven' themselves. He owned 3 canoes at that time; sometimes there were 3 or more nets per canoe, sometimes only one. A long, long, time ago canoes were made here from big trees; perhaps, he cannot be sure, they came from north of the lagoon. The new seine net, the *yevudor*, was made from imported materials bought in Keta.

In 1914 he was at Gododzore, east of Lome, with the *yevudor*. As the 'supervisor' for his father's net he travelled with his brothers, always to Dahomey or Togo. Most of the company members were people from other families - but they did not use the word *company* at that time. There were women, too, some of them wives, some young girls, some old ladies; 'any woman who feels to go can go'. The group always bore the name of the net owner, who usually also happened to own the canoe. If the net owner did not form his own company, then the operator used, merely, 'to render account to

the owner'.

When they migrated in the old days some of the people used to walk to join them; if the beach was a good one, they liked to remain there as long as possible. They took (say) 3 canoes to the beach, with perhaps 15 or 20 people in each of them. No one fixed the number of women who came too. Four or five special women (or even more) were selected for cooking duties, they were usually wives or daughters of the fishermen; others could join the group as fish traders. 'It was a law that everyone should stay for the whole season' - which at that time was some 4 to 5 months.

The women fish sellers 'rendered account' at, or near, the end of the season, being entitled to use the cash meanwhile; responsibility for payment rested with the husband (or other attached man). Each woman was shown the particular stones representing the value of the fish she had received on credit on any day; and she kept corresponding stones at home, so that she would know what she owed. Sometimes other types or sizes of stone, shells, corn etc. were used: yes, that meant that each woman had her own kind of currency. Special company members had the task of collecting the 'currency' and handing it to the new owner; as each woman had her own collection there was no need for a box with compartments, so that a pot with a cover was used for storage. But, even so, each woman had to be trusted.

In the old days net owners never went to sea; his father never went, but he himself went as a young man, being both a crew member and his father's representative. Formerly the secretary, for whom there was then no name, was the man who steered the canoe from the bow, using an oar. There was no word for the man with the functions of a bosun - but [after some discussion] they wonder whether the obsolete word *yelewonu* might have been used; he was usually a relative of the net owner and acted as captain on all occasions, taking a bit extra when sharing the money.

At the end of the season the net takings were divided into 7 parts. As the net owner not only owned the net outright, but also supplied the net bag, the rope, the cork, the leads etc. and was responsible for repairs to the canoe, he got 2 (of the 7) parts 'for the net and canoe etc.' and one other part for him personally. As for the 4 parts that went to the company, the share of each man, whether he pulled at the beach, mended nets or went to sea, was based on the secretary's attendance register, the bosun being responsible for the actual division. During the season his father's son, the captain, was responsible for all decisions affecting repairs, using money they had currently available and not calling on capital.



On returning from an expedition, his father was more likely to have built a house, or to have bought land or a coconut plantation, than to have invested the proceeds in a new canoe - though he might have bought one later. This is how things were, because it was possible to pay for canoes in instalments, over a period of perhaps a year; or to borrow the money required. The point is that the net always comes first; after making a net, the owner can somehow always get a canoe.

When his father died he owned 6 nets: one *afafador* [the huge seine], 3 *yevudor* and 2 *ali* for deep sea fishing. His brother's sons inherited 2 of these nets because their father, who had died young, had helped his father, who had expressed the wish that they should benefit. However, a man's self-acquired property usually passes to his children; if they are sensible they select one, two or three of their number, usually the eldest included, to act on behalf of all of them, and then the property stands a better chance of remaining intact. Personal property never evolves into family property, it remains with the sons and the sons' children [wishful thinking?]. 'When you die and your son does not inherit [all of?] your property it will reduce, being transferred to someone else's property.' The older people will try and settle any dispute. Supposing a son to be so foolish or wicked as to sell a net, the other sons will try and reclaim it. It wouldn't happen that a man's sons would jointly sell his property, so as to be able to share the proceeds between them.

He says that his father's net is still in operation, being on this beach now. [Even if none of the original netting remains, nets are eternal.] Also, he has a net of his own. Various of his brothers use their father's net; while they are using it they are regarded as full net owners, except that they do not get a personal share of the proceeds, which all 'goes to the net' [i.e. to the *agbadoho* ].

Did the mother's side benefit on his father's death? 'No', he insisted with vehemence, 'there was nothing for the mother's side here.' Even when a man had an active sister, nothing would have gone to her unless the deceased had made a 'paper' [i.e. a formal will, which was very rare].

The division of the proceeds is still into sevenths, as with his father. He cannot show us his records today, but promised [too vaguely] that he would look for them. [Has he got any?] As the main inheritor, he is in charge of the central fund (*agbadoho*) and ought to keep a separate record of it; his brothers are told if this money is 'getting finished' or how speedily it is increasing, for any time the brothers want something they approach him. But 'this money is for use by the net' he says emphatically; and after the season is

over the fishermen's advances are returned to the central fund. Loans may be made by this fund, for instance enabling a man to buy a canoe for his own use. At the end of the season the net's share goes into the fund. In the old days there was no proper central fund. Vaguely and unconvincingly he says that the fund was established following his father's death - adding that all fishermen have this idea! The fund would never be used to help a brother who had left fishing; but a father might be allowed to borrow from it to educate a son. Asked if he banked his money, he looked bewildered at the very notion.

6th May. Living in Blekuso, in a storey-house on the lagoon side of the road, which is elegantly furnished with a new carpet, 'contemporary furniture', etc., is Mr *Fedevi* (or *Frederick*) *Awuye*, who owns 7 nets and 7 canoes, 4 of each of them here, the rest near Abidjan in the Ivory Coast. As it is very late, we arrange to meet again in two days time.

8th May We return to the elegant house. Mr *Awuye* is ashamed that he cannot write or speak English: 'I asked my father to send me to school but he refused.' *Awuye*, his father, who had originally been a weaver, began sea fishing long before 1914, when he was a boy; his first journey was to Lagos, with a *yevudor* and an Ewe company; somebody he knew was already there. There were Fante fishermen there, and people from so many parts of Eweland. They travelled both ways by steamer (the *Lokoja*), staying there about a year; there were about 25 men, 6 women and 3 canoes. When he was old enough to control his late father's net he went to Tetekopfe beach, between here and Denu. His father's gear had first passed to his father's brother, as he was too young, but later the whole business had passed to him.

He speaks of *agbadoho* [in ideal terms] as 'a central fund for the net of my father', insisting that the money that is paid out is always paid in again. He must keep his brothers informed on the condition of the fund. The secretary keeps the *agbadoho* accounts, but they don't tell him everything! A man might lend from his *agbadoho* charging interest and demanding a house or a net as security; a paper would record the agreement.

His (net) proceeds from seining are divided into 4 parts:

|                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| net owner            | 1               |
| company members      | 2 <sup>+</sup>  |
| 'active members' and |                 |
| regular net-menders  | 1 <sup>++</sup> |

- + The net owner and the bosun are responsible for dividing this. 'We have a whistle and you come to the beach and have a register. When you are absent without leave we fine you. The company have made their own law; the fine might be 2s, 5s, 10s, according to circumstances.' This fine is deducted from a man's share at the final share-out.
- ++ This part is divided in half; one half for the active members who go to sea, the other half (*dosaga*) being for the company members who are regular net-menders - there are also casual net-menders.

While so far as he is concerned this is the traditional system of division he knows that each net owner has his own system. The company members learn about his system in advance.

His nets and 3 canoes are now at Elizabeth beach about 5 miles from Abidjan; he has a permanent house there, the crew members having temporary houses. He has 'more than 200 men' there, the seines being operated about 200 yds apart. They pay the chief for permission to fish. More than 100 Anlo women are there with the company. Each one is attached to a company member, except that former members' widows are allowed. Children, also, are allowed - even children whose parents are not company members, for they can help. Nowadays the fish is sold through the company women, who have to pay what is owing every two or three months; 'the clerk calls out what they owe, but they are given time to come and pay.' He knows of the system of recording sums owing with the use of stones etc.; alternatively, one can use a long stick notched with a knife to represent numbers.

At Abidjan the season is as long as 2 years, transport costs being so heavy. They may sail from Lome to Abidjan in a French ship, which also carries the canoes; but the difficulty is that a return ticket is valid for a year only, so some of them save money by going by lorry. He is personally much opposed to men leaving before the end of the season, but illness sometimes necessitates this, in which case you have to guess the sum that is owing to them. Sometimes men are charged by the police for breaking their agreements with him; and sometimes a quarrelsome man is sent home. Many men do not want to be net owners; they just join companies in order to build houses and 'find money'. He would take on an inexperienced man as a rope-puller, but not as a canoe man. Actually some Hausa men in Abidjan help to pull the ropes and carry the fish; although the local people are friendly, they do not do this.



He shows us some specimen advance papers. One Denu man received £30 from 19th January, 1961, in return for 2 1/2 years work; another in similar position received but £10. Another, from north of the lagoon, received £20 for 2 years work. Three Kedzi men received, respectively, £25, £20 and £74 - the latter, who was not a bosun, 'bolted away' and had not been seen again. [Advance papers are so standard in wording that printed forms are sometimes used.]

The headwoman is 'any reliable woman'. Women are divided into groups of about 5, although they work as individual traders. 'When a woman is troublesome, she is not allowed to work again until she becomes sober.' He produces a letter of 4th April, 1963, from the secretary at Abidjan, which reports that the women owe a large sum and are refusing to pay. But, still, 'the companies are moving very well' and he is proposing to buy another canoe.

Although he insists that the Abidjan fishing is his own business, not a family affair, yet his brothers and his deceased father's brothers' sons are there participating in various capacities.

He also has about 90 men operating his nets on Blekuso beach here. Like those who go to Abidjan, they all receive cash advances.

7th May. This Keta fisherman has 2 nets and 2 canoes at Kedzi; as he is poor his nets are rented out on *mavee*. He and his brother are making netting while we talk, one section being for a seine.

Their father, *Avorklikle*, inherited a lagoon net made of local cotton - 'our grandmothers did this work'; he started beach-fishing at Kedzi. About thirty years ago, when his father was old, he had travelled to Anecho, in Togo, with his father's *ali* net. About 20 men went to Anecho, followed by women who walked there; they remained some 5 to 6 months. The net was permanently there, and is still there, being looked after by the bosun, who is his brother's son. (An old man sitting here is being employed to make a new bag for that very net; it will take him about three months of full time work; now it turns out that, although he is paid for his work, he is the (real) brother of his 'employer'.)

He spontaneously mentions that the idea of *agbadoho* is an old one. 'A man who travels for fishing carries part of the *agbadoho* with him.' But when a young man travels he must not take more than £25, even if the fund is £200 altogether, because he may be attacked by thieves. If you lose the money, but

are evidently 'trying', your father will replace it when you go again. However many canoes a man might own there would never be more than one central fund formed after his death.

8th May. At Zongo Beach, Keta, we watch the landing of a net from Kedzi; the net owner pays the chief fisherman something for the use of the beach. The wives are not here today, all the fish being sold to outsiders. There is serious, almost grim, bargaining, before the price per basket for small fish, which form the bulk of the catch, is agreed. Two very large fish are retained for the crew. Many people, including outsiders who helped with the hauling of the net, have fish dashed to them. The money paid for fish is put into a large saucepan held by one man; another man measures the fish in baskets; first he overfills the basket, which stands in a large basin, then he scoops four more lots into it with both hands, with a final dash at the end. The women are anxious: some are annoyed, some fail to get any fish. [To me it seems curious that the price is not higher, but 'fairness' demands that it should not be raised while selling is in progress.] The price is 13s per (overfilled) basket and, owing to lack of time, no monetary change can be given until later.

9th May. An ancient lady, *Dadoahoe*, the mother of the fisherman in whose Kedzi house we are sitting, relates that she travelled many times in the past, but has been retired now for a long time. The Germans were in Togo when she first went there and she also went later. When they first reached Dahomey with the *yevudor* net, they found Ewe fishermen settled there permanently with the *ali* net. Those who removed permanently remained strongly attached to their home town in Eweland, sometimes sending their children to school there. The *ali* nets used by the early migrants were very long and made from local materials.

*Agbeadoawu*, the net-owning son of the old lady, says [speculating wildly] that *agbadoho* had existed 'even before my grandfather'. Formerly, when a net owner lacked money 'he asked the women to collect from their own pockets to help him'; this would be his sisters, his daughters, his uncles' wives and anybody who could help, either from the maternal or paternal sides. This money was a kind of loan; he can remember when it was paid in cowry shells; it was treated as though it were *agbadoho*. The women were repaid after the season was over. *Agbadoho* is the net owner's own property, kept in a pot with a cover, quite separate from the company's money.

He says that every net owner should have an *agbadoho*, even if he owns millions of £s. 'This money represents the net - is, in a sense, the net.' The idea is an ancient one. 'If you have not got an *agbadoho* your net will be

a loss when damaged.' 'If this money is not properly cared for you will starve and die' adds the old lady.

The advance system, which is new, originally came into existence in connection with transport expenses: 5s or so was given to a company member to proceed to the beach by lorry. Nowadays, however, transport expenses are met at the time by the net owner.

First of all he operated from Keta beach; then he went westwards to Cape St Paul with his father's net; then to Togo, beyond Lome; finally, after going to Grand Popo, he went to Ouidah (Dahomey), about 16 years ago, where his father's net still is, and where his younger brother lives permanently - though he happens to be visiting here at present. First he says that, being the eldest brother, he himself is in charge of the *agbadoho*, but then he is forced to admit that his younger brother in Ouidah is in charge of both net and *agbadoho*.

But he, Agbeadoawau, is in charge of the *agbadoho* for the nets cast from this beach (Kedzi); there is one fund for all nets on the same beach. At the moment he is in constant trouble as, apart from his son who is bosun, he has only got temporary members of his company, including schoolchildren; his net will be cast next Saturday when the schoolchildren are free. [Mr Hukporti thinks that he is using the *agbadoho* for house building at present.]

A 'wife' of a company member may be anybody, including a friend or a relation; the head woman is consulted as to the suitability of any particular woman. [Mr Hukporti reflects that the women function within a male framework. While each woman is a separate economic entity, she has several loyalties: to all the other women, to her own business, to her particular man and to the whole company.]

11th May. Here at Adina (where there are houses with commemorative names such as Congo Villa, Abidjan House, etc.) we see a casual group operating a *yevudor*. There is a regular company which works most days, but today being Saturday schoolboys, carpenters, etc., are operating the net, while the regular men take a rest. At 10 a.m. they immediately cast the net again, for the second time today, and hope to haul it in at 2 p.m. Sometimes they might cast four times daily.

The net owner lives just by the beach. He has two sons in Accra, one in the Army and the other at secondary school. His regular company members come from Blekuso and from north of the lagoon. Nowadays he never travels

with his nets, but operates them here.

The price of baskets of fish today is 16s, the buyers being strangers. Demand exceeds supply with this small catch from the first casting. [Why not raise the price?] The man acting for the company started at £1 per basket, the women at 12s, one woman being appointed to speak for all those present. The net owner is receiving the money; the bosun is sharing out the fish.

Mr Hukporti says that each company keeps its accounts in a different way. Some book the money received from outside women traders - *xelatowo* - , others don't. If the wives get too little fish they may be given money for trading. It's not necessarily the case that the wives receive either credit or a lower price.

Sunday 12th May. Today I interview my excellent assistant, Mr *Felix Hukporti*, as though he were an informant. This comes about because he visits me to say something he feels he has overlooked formerly, which is that the secretary often gets a commission on the total (gross) proceeds, for he is, in a sense, an employee of the crew. Were the net owner to engage a secretary whom the crew do not like or trust, they can insist that *they* are paying him and that he should be replaced. The secretary may get 6d in the £ - there is no rule about this; in addition, of course, he will get his share as a crew member. It is essential that the crew should have confidence in the accounts, for only then will they work as an effective team. Another member who is, in a sense, appointed by the crew is the second-bosun, *amega avelia*, who may be the canoe steersman.

Before the season starts there is a meeting at the net owner's house, at which the time for departure to the beach is agreed. 'Has anyone any objection to 17th June for Abidjan?' Everyone raises his hand in approval. If anyone disagrees he is asked to explain; if his excuse is reasonable he is allowed to arrive up to a week late - but this is unusual. The secretary is called on to read out the 'bye-laws', which are drawn up afresh by the net owner for each season. 'So: we are leaving on 17th June and everyone agrees.'

Turning to the actual fishing routine, when the whistle blows three times in the morning, this means 'go to the beach'. The secretary has to go round and see if anyone is sick: 'You write down the names of those reporting sick; then you send them to hospital or give them pills'. Anyone who pretends to be sick is charged with absence without good cause. The number of pills issued must be written down; the number of people sent to hospital is noted and the company pays the expenses. When someone refuses to go to sea for

no good reason, he is 'charged' - which means that he has to appear before the whole company after the day's work is over, when they always meet together to learn of the day's takings, which are read out by the secretary. At this meeting, which is held in the evening, before the crew have taken their 'chop', the time of the next net-casting is announced.

The secretary takes no written notes about sales on the beach, but records everything in his head, to be written down later. The ostentatious way in which the money is put by the traders into the collecting-saucepan on the beach, is as much to say - 'this money is not going directly into the pocket of the net owner'. The saucepan is brought before the company and emptied onto a blanket or table, where it is counted; then the company decides whether to meet any expenses immediately or to delay. A new net ought to be paid for from the *agbadoho*; but all repairs of existing nets should be paid for from the company's money. In extreme cases, if the *agbadoho* is nearly finished, the new owner may borrow from the company on condition that the money is returned at the end of the season - no interest being charged. The stock of material for net-mending belongs to the net owner, who has to be paid from the company's money when any materials are used; the company never keeps a stock of its own.

At the end of every 'month' they 'make account' for that period. A month includes 8 market days. [So that, given the 4-day market week in this part of Eweland, it ought to be 32 days long?]. People don't think in terms of the 7-day week. So they work on Sundays, when they may go to church in the evening; nowadays many fishermen adhere to indigenous churches.

Some young men prefer not to join a company because they want to be free; but they make much less money by working on a daily basis. Sometimes casual labour is rewarded with a monetary share of the catch, sometimes with a sum agreed in advance, sometimes with fish. For any particular company there is apt to be a fixed rule.

There are some women net-owners - for instance, one who lives in a modern house at Kedzi. She obtained the net from her husband and it is operated by her son. Women never acquire nets for the purpose of letting them out on *mavee*, for *mavee* only applies when circumstances prevent the owner from operating the net herself. Any man or woman who wants a quick profit from net-ownership will buy a net and sell it to someone else on hire purchase, seizing it if the purchaser defaults. If a man dies sonless, a daughter may operate a net, but it will not pass to her sons. If a man's brother has helped him to operate his net, then he (rather than a daughter) will be the



preferred inheritor in the absence of sons. But, contrary to what is often said, it is quite usual for each of two brothers to be a net owner on his own account. Whatever the social status attached to net-ownership may be, there is no word to distinguish the owners of large seines from those with small lagoon nets only. (Incidentally, lagoon fishing may involve large companies.)

13th May. Notes on a further discussion with *Mr Hukporti*. There is an idea that 'a net should never die'. It is not expressed exactly like this, but rather do fishermen assure one that their father's, or even their grandfather's net is still in use. Even if the net has been burnt in a fire and only one lead remains; even if it is an entirely different length - yet it remains the same net as the original. [In this way nets resemble land; they are a form of perpetual property; they are indestructible.]

Nobody here makes a written will. But if a nephew had worked with his father's brother then this uncle might write a paper giving him a net. A son (with a living father) would never be a net owner. While the father continues as a net owner the son works for him; when he retires the son is still not the net owner. But if a father buys a net for his son it means that 'the father's business is dying' and that no one will care for the father's old nets. Even if a son buys a net for himself it ought to be operated as part of his father's 'business' during the latter's lifetime - but, admittedly, this doesn't always happen. When a father dies the family head will transfer the property to the son and then withdraw from the scene.

In former times the property passed to the sisters and her sons; but Felix Hukporti never witnessed this, he was only told about it. The sister's son might pass it to his sisters and so forth. He insists that this applies to no part of Anlo country today. If the sister or the sister's son has been very active in the net owner's business, he may then be given whatever the net owner decides, but this is not inheritance.

If a man is already looking after his widowed sister, then the family will realise that in the event of his death they should continue to do so. If the widow's father is still alive he will be the one to look after her and then, on his death, some of his property will pass to her. Nowadays divorce is becoming more common; formerly, but not now, it was considered that men who had divorced their wives were not good husbands. Rich men, who can afford to look after the children, are apt to have many wives.

Rich women traders build houses. The elders of the family discuss whether any such house should pass to the woman's sons or daughters on her

death; it may be the elder brothers of the dead woman who decide between them when the time comes.

14th May. *Awudi Dzakupasu* is one of the secretaries of a company one of whose two nets has been cast this morning; he is happy to speak to us on the beach at Vodza. His season, which began on 1st January, is to be 7 months and 2 weeks long. Of the original 100 men in the company, 90 now remain. All received advances and all live in nice, temporary rooms on the beach. They are all Anlo men from different places. There are two secretaries, one for the company and one for the net owner; the two of them compare notes. Secretaries do not write records on the beach but recollect them later. Money received from outside women is used for the company's food, but only if it is a small sum; otherwise it is recorded like the sum credited to the wives. To simplify his work, he prefers that each wife should take the same number of baskets daily; these baskets are of a standard size and the wives pay less than the outsiders; sometimes the wives immediately resell, at a profit, to the outsiders.

The proceeds from selling the fish (after deducting all expenses) are divided into 9 parts:

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| net and canoe <sup>+</sup>            | 3 |
| all the active members <sup>++</sup>  | 2 |
| the company as a whole <sup>+++</sup> | 4 |

- + First of all he says that the net and the canoe get 4 parts, but he later adds that the net owner gives one of these parts to the 'active members'.
- ++ The active members are: (i) those who go to sea every day; (ii) the 6 specialists in charge of the rope who never go to sea; (iii) the bosun and the secretary.
- +++ After one of these 4 shares is allotted to the bosun and the secretary, the remaining 3 shares are divided among everybody, 'according to activity' - a register being kept.

As we are speaking the canoe beaches; it's a fine big craft, with 16 paddlers and one steersman. Unusually, the paddles are not trident-shaped; the secretary says that in rough weather you can accidentally wound your brother with one of those paddles.

With such a big net they can make very big catches; sometimes 200 to 300 large baskets. About fifty men may pull each of the ropes.

The secretary shows us his fine large attendance ledger in which he writes down everyone's name afresh every day, deleting the names of absentees. At the top of each page the takings for the day are shown. Another book relates to the fish received by each wife. Sometimes they 'make accounts' with the wives after two to three months, as they have just done. If a wife fails to pay, the sum she owes is deducted from her husband's share at the end of the season. When a matter is 'above the jurisdiction' of the head woman (*doto srowo*) the woman in trouble must appear before him and the bosun.

The system for dividing the catch at the end of the season is adopted, in agreement with the company members, before fishing starts. The net owner wouldn't impose 'his system' on the company if they didn't agree.

Under the *mavee* system, the net owner has to meet the running expenses of net repair, whereas under the normal company system he does not. *Mavee* may be on a daily basis. The danger to the net owner is that the net may be seriously damaged when it is let out. There is a system known as *kofetowo* which is that of forming a company to take someone else's net, for a whole season, to another beach; this does not involve any standard division between the net owner and the renter.

He thinks that few professional people are net owners. Although people of his age are commonly net owners, he, the secretary, doesn't want to bother to operate as a net owner, although he is a fisherman's son; he is too happy as he is, and has plenty of responsibility; however, he does use a casting net in the lagoon. He agrees that most net owners are net owner's sons - but not all of them. He knows two women net owners, whom he names, who acquired nets for themselves; they have appointed men to take charge.

As for *agbadoho*, he keeps records for it. Corks, leads, net, rope ... all new materials come from the *agbadoho*: 'it is as though the company had borrowed from the *agbadoho*.' An actual store of materials is kept so that there is no delay in effecting repairs etc.; he is in charge of this store, which is behind us where we are sitting on the beach.

They have no particular day off here, and it is only when there is a funeral or some other ceremony, or when the weather is rough, that they fail to cast during the season. He sees from his register that a net was cast on 21



days in the month of January. Were they to take a net to the beach west of Keta then they would have to observe the 'no fishing on Wednesday' rule.

14th May. We talk about the sales of fishing gear, mainly netting, in the co-operative shop by Keta market and in the other shop next door to it.

The biggest mesh used in making up a *yevudor* is 2 inches; it makes up the main length furthest from the bag and is itself sometimes called *yevudor*; attached to it is netting of one inch or 3/8th inch mesh; the finest mesh is next to the bag - this is *agbo*, literally 'he-goat'.

Fishermen, usually bosuns, come to the shops to order netting for repairs or extension, by the yard or fathom. They think of the depth of the netting in terms of the number of meshes.

For the rope which is fixed onto the net the length of a coil is 240 yds; the length of a coil of pulling (hauling) rope is 300 yds.

When a net is put out on *mavee* it is the net owner who comes to buy supplies; he is usually accompanied by a company member, so that the members know the expenses involved.

The shops usually demand cash; formerly they used to allow payment at the end of the fishing season, but this was unsatisfactory.

The material for a big nylon bag costs about £100, compared with £30 for cotton; nylon bags bought in 1961 are still all right. The cost of a cotton seine net, with wings about a mile long, including the rope, leads, everything, might be about £1,100, of which about £130 would be rope; the corresponding cost of a nylon net might be about £3,000. But very few men come to buy a complete net. Nor is it the practice to buy pieces of netting and to hold them until sufficient has been bought for a net of operable length; a new piece of net would be fixed to an old piece - that is the way to start. It is unusual for a man to spend more than £200 on netting at any one time; bundles of netting might be 50, 100 or 200 yds long.

Nets are often bought second hand; this is the usual way for a man, who has inherited no net, to start working. If a seine net is seriously damaged, it can still be sold for use in the lagoon. Net auctions are held; but only following a legal writ of *fi-fa*. Men sometimes get tired of particular nets and want to sell. People come from as far away as the Western Region to buy gear here in Keta.

The co-operative shop is very ill-stocked compared with the private one which is stacked high with gear so that one can scarcely enter.

'A net is a living thing, which can be enlarged, improved, developed.'

15th May. *Mensah Bina Kpodo* is the owner of a fine large compound house near the official Keta Rest House. Yes, as an old man he is a 'capitalist fisherman', the owner of a huge store of net materials, mostly for sale, as he is switching from cotton to nylon. We see his vast store of cotton nets on the other side of the road by the beach; fortunately there are still some people who are prepared to buy cotton. He has 5 nylon nets: one is here, one is at Anloga, one is at Grand Popo and 2 are near Abidjan; the Abidjan nets are operated by one company, with one bosun, so he has 4 companies.

First he says that the system of division of the proceeds is the same for each company and that formerly he divided into 3 parts, taking one for himself. Then he admits that everything has changed and that all his nets are let out on *mavee*. He has one *agbadoho* for all the nets. When the fund is depleted you go to a friend or relative to borrow from his *agbadoho* - more usually a relative, because then there is no worry if you don't repay. As for net owners who borrow from their own *agbadoho*, this can only be done at the end of the fishing season when you know what is required of you.

When a father dies it is uncommon for his nets to be divided between his sons. After the death each son will endeavour to buy his own net. A son might be helped from the *agbadoho* if his financial situation became bad, but he has to repay. Yes, he agrees: the father's death is the signal for each son to be enterprising on his own account. At the same time, as there is a lot of difficulty about half-brothers working together on a net, it may be necessary to divide a deceased father's nets between sets of brothers of different mothers. [A subject which is too embarrassing to discuss owing to the very great reluctance to contemplate division of a set of nets.] 'If a father decides there is too much trouble he may become defiant and furiously divide his net between his sons.' A quarrelsome son might be prevented from working with the nets; he would then have to work with another company. Transfer to other companies may also occur with younger sons who are not bosuns.

He remembers sailing down to Lagos before 1914, taking his *yevudor* and *ali* nets with him; they returned by steamer, on the money they had earned. They fished from Lagos island and taught the local Yoruba fishermen how to use their nets.

Once he bought a lorry, but the business failed because the driver was unreliable. Then, 'one hundred' fishermen bought a motor boat for deep sea fishing, collecting the money amongst themselves; the whole business collapsed because of unreliable people and where is the boat now? He laughs and laughs at the thought of it, and of the secretaries who evaded them, there being no receipts. The boat was bought on hire purchase - he laughs again.

At this moment his son, Kwaku Bina, who is in charge of his nets in the Ivory Coast, arrives by air from Abidjan, having returned for a funeral.

[The radio box, which is always on, starts to play 'pat a cake, pat a cake, baker's man...' As usual, English recording.]

Kwaku Bina says that all his company members are Anlo men. There are better nylon nets available in Abidjan. There may be some 20 to 50 Ghanaian companies on his beach - Ewe, Ada, Fante, Ga, etc. The Fante companies travel far beyond Abidjan. He has heard that the present season in Liberia is bad, otherwise he had thought of going there.

They have been going to Abidjan for about 30 years now to the same beach; when they first started they took no women with them. The men don't marry there: 'it was too far away and everybody was afraid'. Now the women are making money there. 'The price is better in Abidjan; you live better there; you catch more fish.' But getting his money back here from Abidjan is a 'tug of war'. There is so much difficulty that he brings French money back with him £500 at a time. And the Ghana customs are apt to charge import duty on fishing gear.

15th May. The half-brother (same father) of *Mensah Bina Kpodo*, who we interviewed earlier today; he is an old style business man of quality, who lives in a large storey-house surrounded by quarters for company members. A man introduced to us as his bosun is also a net owner; the old man's net and his net are operated by the same company and he claims that there are two sets of accounts.

Although credit is usually given to the wives, the company sometimes *appears* to sell them fish for cash to show that everyone is being treated equally! Then the wives may get some of their money back through their husbands. If the outsiders' price is (say) £1, then the wives' price, whether credit or not, is about 15s.

[He owns a mechanical cornmill, which is now operating beneath his window; talking against it in this great heat is almost unbearable, so we shall soon stop.]

'I borrowed from my *agbadoho* to build my house.' At the end of each fishing season he takes out money - say £100 for cement, £50 for wood. 'It would not be proper to borrow too much from the *agbadoho* at any one time.' The *agbadoho* should never fall below a certain level; and it might take 10 seasons to build a house. 'Really, you can borrow from the *agbadoho* for any purpose, if you actually repay. You can borrow for education, certainly.'

17th May. We talk with *Kwame Sekle Adzaka*, the bosun of a company whose net has just been cast opposite the Shell petrol station near the centre of Keta, where we sit and talk to him. The net is a big one, 7 coils long; the net owner is at present at Lome with another net.

The bosun has done much travelling: Accra (often), Senya Beraku, Saltpond, Elmina, Anomabu, Cape Coast (all the foregoing in Ghana), Ouidah, 'Abidjan' (2 years 6 months in 3 seasons), Sasandra (beyond Abidjan), Liberia, Freetown ... and other places which he fails to recollect. He is always with different net owners because he prefers this. At Ouidah he stayed with the chief and enjoyed himself; the chief had known his father, who had been chief fisherman there; now the Ouidah people operate the *yevudor* for themselves. He went much further on than Ouidah, to an island, but he doesn't know its name.

Why does he always change his net owner? Because this suits him and he is very popular. 'When I leave there comes a trouble.'

Fish is sold to wives, sisters, cousins, any woman who happens to arrive. They sell to all these women on a credit basis; though this is sometimes troublesome, the women don't run away. If there is a debt the husband may borrow from the net owner and work with him for another season to repay. Men don't run away.

They have one canoe and 2 nets. They have so many small pieces of net (*ganuvi*); sometimes they attach these pieces, sometimes not, according to the weather. The net owner has left a stock of material, but he has not authorized the purchase of any more. If the stock proves insufficient, then the bosun should approach the net owner's father's brother (who is resident), and if he is authorised to buy more he may borrow from the women for the purpose. The women are not paid any interest, but may be dashed at the end

of the season.

The so-called 'executive members' are:

bosun  
clerk (secretary)  
second-bosun  
head man<sup>+</sup>  
second head man  
controller of the company<sup>++</sup>  
*dodzigla* <sup>+++</sup>

- + Checks up on damage to net or canoe, sees to repair of houses, etc.
- ++ The company's spokesman.
- +++ Regarded as 'the C.I.D. man'; he has the duty of reporting secretly to the bosun; a kind of foreman or general supervisor.

He knows of a company which made £11,000 in seven months, after meeting all expenses. A very good daily catch is £300; he has had £400; but £100 to £200 is common.

The sum a company member gets depends on his attendance according to the register; a man who is continuously active might get £60 for 6 months, after repayment of his advance. The opportunities for borrowing from the company provide a member with security. Up to now a lazy man has got 'full chop', but they are hoping to change this.

He, the bosun, is the one who decides whether to cast the net. At present there is too much current to cast at night. He can detect from the water whether the fish are there: 'he can read the waves'. He gets up early to decide whether to cast.

He doesn't want to be a net owner as he would be scared of the financial responsibilities; yet he is planning to buy a motor boat for deep sea fishing.

17th May. The net this man [unnamed] previously operated was owned at that time by his late father and then by his paternal uncle. Even so, Mr Hukporti says that the net could be seized for non-payment of debt, and would then be auctioned. The canoe, also, could be seized.

He is hopelessly indebted. On 15th May, 1962, he borrowed £320 from a Keta teacher, the sum including interest of £120 for six months. He shows us a document stating that he is shortly to be prosecuted for non-payment. He couldn't pay because he made only £44 during the last fishing season of 1962 when he was working; he says it was the fault of the company, which was not working well. At this moment, as we are sitting there, a writ of summons to appear before the District Magistrate, owing to non-payment of a debt of £90, is delivered, the creditor being a Keta trader who had lent him £60 with interest of £30. [Later Mr Hukporti divulges that he had accompanied this debtor when he borrowed £320 from the teacher, who is also a net owner. He is well known for lending for trading purposes, and representatives often act on his behalf. When he lends money to traders it is on the security of their houses, the usual interest rate being 2s.6d. in the £ for 6 months (25%). Perhaps he charged this net owner as much as 50% because land was offered as security or because he is a poor risk?]

This debtor had earlier shown us a file full of accounts, making it clear that he spent huge sums on drink. He provided Ghana gin when his men came back from sea. He employed daily labourers as net-repairers and paid them with cash and Ghana gin. An item in the account had read: 'Tins of drink for repairing the net and finding people £10'. The entry 'cash for buying fish', related, we were told, to days when the net could not be cast: 10s on a number of days.

His records had indicated, incorrectly, that his net had been cast only 15 times, with net takings of £520; actually, they had cast nearly every day, but if the catch had been small they had not recorded its value, using the takings to buy food etc., the value of which was not recorded. [It is probably true that most net owners follow the practice of not accounting for small catches, but this would seem to be an extreme case.]

An affidavit, dated 19th October, 1962, showed that this unfortunate net owner had sued 17 crew members, to whom he had made advances, for failure to work with him:

'That I looked out for them from place to place but all to no avail. I have now heard that they have received another advances from other fishermen as some have left to up countries (*sic*) to do fishing with the fishermen and some of them are in this area.'

(One man, a captain, had received an advance of £37 10s, another £20; most of them had received about £8 or less. There was one Lagos man of their



number, and even one Hausa.)

This completes my summaries of the information obtained in Keta. I supplement it with accounts of two interviews with Ewe fishermen which were held on beaches west of Accra.

29th May, 1963. On a sandbank by Sakumo Lagoon at the mouth of the river Densu, which lies about 110 miles west of Keta (as the coast runs), and is close to Botianaw, we speak with *Bennett Kwudoka*, who claims that he has come here every year for 16 years, from Srogboe, west of Anloga, for seine fishing. Although he refers to himself as the net owner, the actual owner is an old man in Keta, and he works the net on a *mavee* basis. Until the season closed in March, about 50 of his men, all of them Anlo like himself, were working here; a few of them remain here now to do a little fishing. Two companies were here and remnants from each are working on a daily basis.

He says that he always comes here with the same net owner's net; He even claims [nets being immortal] that for 16 years he has operated the same net. Of course, they keep on replacing portions. The net owner also owns another net at this beach, which is in someone else's charge. Whether he (Bennett) will ever become a net owner 'is in the hands of god'.

Before starting to fish, his company pays £5 to the Botianaw chief; and they pay him £25 at the end of the season.

His bosun, who has been with him for a long time, will return for the next season. Before the season starts there is no agreement on the system of the division of the proceeds. Later on, he himself, the bosun, the secretary and about two other prominent members, meet and decide on the share-out, paying regard to the attendance register; the real net owner comes over to witness this.

A good catch from one haul might be worth £200 to £300; the net might be cast twice daily.

On any day they sell fish to both wives and outsiders. The wives get the fish cheaper; if necessary they are charged the same as the outsiders on the beach, some of the money being returned to them later. Last time about 70 women accompanied the men. 'When one woman is coming with her husband

she may bring women assistants; anybody may bring as many women relatives as he wishes; and a man may bring several wives.'

He is responsible for recruiting the company members and will start soon for next season. The net owner gives him the money for advances. All the members are from the neighbourhood of Anloga town. Sometimes he pays someone to recruit on his behalf.

If the catches have been good, they send for the net owner to come for his money before the end of the season.

They don't buy food for the company members. But every Monday they give out 4s 'chop money' for each man; they have always done this. His view is that it is the women's profits which sustain the men; and men may borrow during the season. Besides, when leaving home each member may get £10.

On the beach at Botianaw we also meet *J.K. Dedzo*. There are usually three companies here, during the season, respectively from Anloga, Srogboe (west of Anloga) and Keta (his own company). He claims that he has been coming here regularly every year since 1943 and that the other two companies, also, are regular. At the end of the season he pays £12 plus drinks to the Botianaw chief. His company, of about 40 men, is re-formed every season, even the bosun being new. There are sometimes a few Ga or Fante men included, but none from here; last season all the members were Anlo men. The local people own a few *yevudor* which, according to him, they don't operate properly, despite the instruction the Ewe men have given them! He himself has another net at Apam (west of Winneba) which he will bring here next season. The season ended in March, but some of the men are still here and may cast the net with outside help.

The net he uses is 300 yds long. He shows us a much-mended nylon bag, which is 3 years old; a cotton bag might last only for 2 months. He claims that about 12 years ago he bought a complete new *yevudor* for £700 in Accra, and is still using it. Last year he bought some nylon netting and mixed it with cotton.

Members of the company 'chop free', the cost of the chop, especially the maize, being deducted from the final proceeds before the division into



parts.

One or two women (even up to four) might use a particular fish-smoking oven, of which there are many in this village. As net owner, he might lend the women money to buy firewood at the beginning of the season - they have to use firewood as there are insufficient coconut shells. Local women don't know how to smoke properly! The women sell their fish at Kokompe and Mamprobi markets, unless people come to Botianaw to buy from them; sometimes they sell fresh fish on the beach. The net owner provides each woman with a notebook, in which the secretary helps her to record the numbers of baskets of fish and the prices. Whereas outsiders always pay cash for fish, wives pay less than other women and often get credit; but credit is extended for a maximum of a week only - 'it is too dangerous to extend credit here for too long'. On returning home from the beach the company may decide to reduce the price of a basket, as a dash. Then, if the market price proves to be very poor, they might later call the whole company together and lower the price, altering it in the women's notebooks.

A complete record is kept of all proper food, especially maize, which is bought, but they don't bother to enter money spent on bread or rum, which is 'just paid from the beach'. Women sometimes buy cassava dough with their money and give some to the men: 'profit is always going to them for the fish'. A man with no wife will 'chop with' another man. Each woman cooks for herself. A special woman is responsible for buying maize for the company; she is paid for this work. The women buy pepper, salt, onion, tomato and all kinds of vegetables for themselves. On ordinary days, after the catch has been landed, the women receive fish for everybody to eat; but the bosun might borrow smoked fish from women when it is too rough to cast the net. Before going to the beach in the morning the fishermen eat bread, paid for by the company.

The proceeds are divided between company members 'according to activity' - there being the usual attendance register. After a discussion at an 'executive meeting' attended by some 4 to 6 members, they might give (say) £10 to the bosun, £5 to the second-bosun, £5 to the secretary and £2 to he who is in charge of the singing. (Those who beat gong-gong count as rope-haulers and are rewarded as such.) As for the main sum, which remains, division is not equal, for instance a good swimmer might get more. Everyone is there at the actual share-out. Small boys get least. As for net-mending, this is one of the routine duties of all company members.

He goes as far as Keta to bank his money: 'Accra is no good, they thief there'. [Inexplicably, he has never heard of *agbadoho*.]

The price of a big canoe, for 13 men, is nearly £150; this is exclusive of the carpenters' work on seats, high hull, etc.

## APPENDIX

### A Fishing Gear Shop in Accra

On *20th October, 1963*, I have a long conversation with Mr Danquah, who runs a prosperous fishing gear business on Kwame Nkrumah Avenue, Accra. Here I note points of relevance to Ewe seine fishing only.

The usual depth of seine nets is 400 meshes. The bundles of netting are apt to be 200 or 300 yds long. The labelling shows the thickness of the twine, and the depth in terms of mesh size. A mesh which is 2 inches square is known as a 4 inch mesh. Ewe, Ga, Fante and other fishermen all have vernacular words for the different mesh sizes.

Yes, the wing of the seine net [as we learnt in Keta] is usually made up of netting of about 3 different meshes. The bag is of 1/2 or 3/4 inch mesh - but different bags may be used at different seasons. The bags which are supplied to this shop are 16 yds long by 200 meshes deep; if their nets are large, fishermen sometimes join 3 or 4 bags together.

The customers cannot usually speak to Mr Danquah in any language he understands, so they need to look round for what they want.

Mr Danquah says that stocks of cotton net are no longer moving well.

Ropes are denoted by their circumference; as with netting the fishermen may bring in specimens for comparison. Coils vary in length from 50 to 240 yds; the shopkeeper prefers to sell whole coils only.

Plastic floats are imported from the USA; they are strong and cost £3 per 50; cork floats formerly came from Spain and Portugal - now only from Spain. The leads are Belgian.

## II: Ewe Shallot Farming

### Introduction

Since, as I have already mentioned, my interest switched away from shallot farming to beach-seining, the following oral material is slight and merits only a brief introduction. The material does something to supplement the principal, though inadequate, sources on the socio-economic organisation of shallot farming, which are Grove (1966), Nukunya (1975) and Wills (1962). As Wills emphasised, this astonishing industry is unique in Ghana - yields being remarkable by any standard. By 1962 it had developed particularly in an area of 1,500 acres near Anloga; yields were said [how reliably?] to have averaged 4 to 8 tons per acre per year of dried shallots.

Although shallot trading had been well established before 1900, the date of the starting of shallot farming in the Anloga area is uncertain, and little is known about earlier cultivation methods. Perhaps it has always been true that the shallot beds, made of sand, are such artificial creations, that the enterprise was never 'farming' in the usual sense, this being reflected in the 'farm renting' system known as *damee* - which, so far as I know, is unique in the West African context, where indigenous renting systems proper are very rare, see Hill (1982) and (1986). Under *damee*, the shallot harvest is divided equally between the 'bed-owner' and tenant, after the deduction of expenses, which may have been incurred by either party.

Wills states that the edge of Keta lagoon is favoured for shallot growing, beds being 'carefully prepared above the level of seepage of brackish water' (*Ibid*: 386); he adds that 'in recent years the areas of production have spread on to the seaward side of the sand spit, particularly in the depressions where sand has been removed to build the shallot beds on the lagoon side'. Owing to the annual flooding of the Keta lagoon, tons of sand are transported each year from one side of the sand spit to the other to maintain the level of the soil above the water-table.

Nukunya (1975: 64) insists that beds vary greatly in size, but are always rectangular.

"...The plots are divided by narrow gutters into small rectangular beds to allow easy access to the crop for weeding and watering... It is in the gutters that the farmer stands in order to reach the crop.

The gutters, which are about one foot wide and one foot deep, also serve as irrigation channels during the dry season and as drainage canals after the rains have flooded the beds."

There appear to be no satisfactory figures of the size-distribution of these unique sandy beds (studded with shallow wells) - many of which are observably very small indeed. Nor, as would be expected, are there any proper sample statistics of numbers of beds owned by individual farmers. Certainly, there are some very big farmers; Nukunya (1969: 44, n.1) mentions the case of a man who owned 230 beds at the time of his death, and I met some large farmers myself. But owing to the very high population density, and to the ease with which plots may be 'rented' (*damee*), most farmers are probably 'small'.

Nukunya (1975: 65) states that cow dung, fish manure, bat droppings and chemical fertilizers (in that order of importance) are the chief forms of manure, each having a specific function.

It is worth noting that Nukunya concludes (1975: 69) that the development of this non-traditional work has 'not necessarily resulted in any drastic tenurial changes' - the position of descent groups and their leaders having 'largely remained intact'.

On shallot wholesaling in Anloga market see Hill (1985: 141-3). Large 'heads' of Anloga shallots (*tadeka* - see Glossary), weighing more than 20 lbs, are distributed throughout Ghana.

## Summarized oral material

3rd April, 1963. *Near the road between Keta and Anloga*

(A) He says he cultivates 'about one hundred' shallot beds which belong: (i) to his own family; (ii) to his wife's family; and (iii) 'to somebody else who does not want to use the land', under an informal arrangement which is not *damee*. He pays his labourers 3s daily to work on his shallot beds from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and he also sometimes gives them food, kola nuts, etc. If there is insufficient rain, he sometimes plants vegetables only, such as tomatoes, on beds. (Much poorly cultivated maize is to be seen on parts of his and other farmers' land.) People bring supplies of cow manure to them from the other side of the lagoon.

(B) He is in charge of all of his late father's shallot beds, as his junior brothers work in Accra - a clerk, a policeman, etc. His day labourers are already known to him. He is particularly in need of assistance when planting. Women labourers are employed when there is need to water the beds from the wells. There are specialist well diggers. (We see piles of cow manure, like a fine sifted material, brought from over the lagoon.)

3rd April. Anloga

(C) I stop at a shoemaker's house; he is also a shallot farmer. His labourers work until 11 a.m. [too hot afterwards as there is no shade] and in addition to wages he gives them breakfast, drink, kola, tobacco, cigarettes... Beds are of varying lengths, but are commonly, though not always, 6ft wide; the unit of measurement used for length is the arm-stretch (double yard or *abadeka*). Shallots are sometimes sold in the ground; indeed, he insists that 'plenty strangers' (Asante, Fante, Ga, Ada, Adwapim and even 'Lagosians' (i.e. Nigerians) and Zabrama), both men and women, come and 'buy' the harvest in the ground, being then responsible for harvesting, peeling and bunching the shallots. He pledges beds (*woba*) himself; first he says he borrowed £30 and then he changes the sum to £50; the creditor has the use of 10 long beds. Beds are never pledged after the seed has been sown.

(D) We call at a fine large house with an attic floored with palm fronds on which the shallots are stored - but there is not much seed there now. Despite what others say, he affirms that sowing-dates are somewhat variable, depending on position in relation to the lagoon and so forth. [He is unconvincing when he says that his own dates are 1st January, 1st May and



1st October.] Sometimes he employs labourers to assist him with harvesting and tying. The number of shallots in the smallest bundle varies between about 15 and 20, depending partly on size; 2 sets of 3 small bundles make up the standard bunch (*sasadeka*), and there are roughly 120 small bundles in a *tadeka*. Before the Togo frontier was closed, traders from that country, both men and women, used to come here to sell shallot seed; but it was probably cheaper to go there oneself. [Brackishness prevents satisfactory seed propagation here.] Bat manure, also, used to be obtained from Togo. Unprepared to estimate his own output of shallots, which is known to be very large, he suggests that some shallot farmers have gross annual incomes of £2,000. Big farmers often build several houses. Of course, there are many small farmers. Even if women own shallot beds they are not themselves real farmers, but have to be helped by men.

5th April. On the lagoon side near Anloga

(E) Thirteen women are carrying sand in pans to the shallot beds; 2s for a 'half day', 4s for a 'whole day'. The farmer is waiting for the heavy rains to fall and then he will sow. He has no land suitable for shallots, so he has to rent 12 beds on the *damee* system; the owner, who has much land, provides the seed and pays the labourers. (According to an inscription on a well sunk in 1958, it cost £1 13s.)

(F) An old man who claims that he got all his land from his grandfather. He says that 10 of the 13 labourers he is employing today are 'kin'; he pays them 2s each and they stop working when the sun is overhead.

(G) This farmer has beds rented to him on long-term *damee*. Sometimes the landowner pays the labourer and buys seed, sometimes he himself. He has a well which cost £1 8s.

(H) His beds are inherited and also rented (*agbledada*); they are widely dispersed. A bed might be rented for a single season, say for 5s. First the farm owner prepares the bed and then he (the tenant) sows it; he rents many beds from one man who provides the seed. The owner has to manure the land. In the main season (*kele*), which is more reliable than this season (*femu*), rent might be 10s or even 15s per bed. They don't measure bed lengths, but ropes are used to get the edges straight. Each farmer tries to make his beds more or less the same width. He may employ people to tie the shallots; the bulbs are sorted, before tying, into small and large, the small being used for seed. His wife sells the shallots in both Anloga and Keta markets. If at any time she happens to have a daughter living in Accra then she might send the shallots to be sold there, a lorry driver acting as an intermediary.

5th April. Anloga

A letter writer shows us some specimen agreements relating to the renting of shallot beds, all of which are in English and use the word 'lease'. All inputs, including manure, are provided by the tenant. The charge for a bed for a season might be 10s, payable after harvest - but part of the rent might be payable in advance. He says that contracts relating to *damee* tenure are sometimes recorded in writing. The agreement may continue indefinitely or be quickly terminated. As the expenses are deducted before the proceeds are halved, and claimed by whichever party had incurred them, the grower's net receipts do not depend on who provides the seed and manure. But if the arrangement is to continue, the tenant is allowed to retain the seed he grows; otherwise it should go to the landlord.

As for pledging (*woba*), this may be preceded, says the letter writer, by borrowing money, at interest of 2s 6d in the £, for about 4 to 6 months. If, then, the debtor does not repay, the shallot beds, which have been security for the loan, may be taken over by the creditor, who will be free to cultivate them. Many beds remain in fact, though not in original intention, pledged for a long time. He shows us a paper relating to 10 beds which were pledged for £50. (Coconut palms, also, may be pledged: and fishing nets canoes and other fishing gear may be security for loans.)

On the next day he shows us a written agreement, headed 'Loan - Receipt', relating to the borrowing of £25 for three months, the security being 9 coconut palms and 6 shallot beds, the locations of which are specified. In the event of the debtor's failure to repay on the due date the creditor has the right to take control of the palms and the shallot beds until the debt has been repaid in full.

Later he says that if a creditor has the use of pledged land for a long time he might meet half the cost of digging new wells; some creditors altogether excuse their debtors from paying for wells.

6th April. Near the road between Keta and Anloga

(J) As it rained hard last night, this elderly farmer has started sowing with the help of many labourers. The seed which he provides himself, his land being on *damee*, is about a year old; he bought it himself at Agu, north of Atakpame in Togo. Under the *damee* system the tenant takes seed for himself, if he wishes, *before* the shallots are divided between himself and the landlord. He says that after about six sowings the seed has to be replaced by fresh

supplies from Togo, and that this may be because the lagoon is brackish. The seeds have to be planted about 4 inches apart, the right way up, in lines which are about 4 inches apart; pepper seed is sown simultaneously. All the labourers are men or young boys, one of them being a farmer whose beds are not yet ready for sowing. In about a fortnight weeding may or may not be necessary, according to the rain; the same uncertainty relates to the need to irrigate.

#### 6th April. Anloga

(K) He has beds on both sides of the motor road. He has not yet started planting as maize is still growing, but the maize on the lagoon side will be removed before the end of April. He won't risk planting on the seaward side this season and affirms [though others differ] that there are effectively only two annual shallot seasons there, starting in August and December. He can't remember how many beds he has got; perhaps about 40 in different areas, some 8 of them on the lagoon side. He inherited his beds from his father who was a cultivator of shallots, cassava, okra, etc. A boy of eleven or twelve might be given one or two beds; he was about sixteen when his father put him in charge of 2 beds. When a father is still active all his sons work for him; 'After a man is dead, if he has four or five sons then some old man of the family will come to the farm and divide the beds between the sons.' There is no rule about whether absent sons should get a share: if they do, a resident brother might look after them. Sons never get beds from their fathers on *damee*, but if a father gives beds to his young sons he may or may not expect to receive some shallots; the father will supply the seed for the first planting and most probably leave the son free after that. If a son neglects a bed it is taken away from him.

When beds are pledged, any investment made by the creditor while he is cultivating, such as the cost of new wells, is added to the sum borrowed; but the creditor will meet half the cost if he has been using the beds for a long time.

(L) The Secretary of the local branch of the United Ghana Farmers Council, in whose office we are talking, has let out his land on *damee*; he may initially give out the beds for a year and then if all goes well he might continue. Although landlords are free, in the absence of a written agreement, to reclaim beds at any time, *damee* often continues for a very long time. It is easy to find *damee* tenants. The tenant ties the big shallots, sells them, and comes and 'makes account' - i.e. giving the landowner half the sale proceeds. If the landlord is a good man he allows his tenant to use all the seed he has grown and he may not inspect the shallots before they are sold. The landlord

is expected to provide wells. If the landlord is pleased with the work he may give the tenant a dash of, say, 2s or 5s after the season. *Damee* is for pepper, okra, tomatoes and even maize, but it cannot apply to a perennial crop like coconut. [It is not clear whether *damee* only applies to crops grown on artificially created beds.]

Other miscellaneous points touched on in this discussion, which lasted for 1 1/2 hours, are: (i) that no one living in the Anloga locality owns land north of the lagoon; (ii) that renting of beds (*agbledada*) is usually for no more than a year or two; (iii) that it is the beds, not the land, which are considered rented; (iv) that virtually all shallot farmers are, also, fishermen; (v) that the great expansion of shallot growing in the past few decades was made possible by the building of many more wells by masons, bricklayers and others; (vi) that both sea and lagoon fish are used for manure, and that supplies may be drawn from some distance away; (vii) that not all suitable land has been converted into shallot beds; and that (viii) one bed might yield between 1 1/2 and 3 big bunches of shallots (*tadeka*) from one sowing. [Owing to the great variation in bed length, this last figure is almost useless; the price of a *tadeka* in Anloga market on this day was about £3.]

#### 8th April. Near the road between Keta and Anloga

It is now about 9 a.m. Women had earlier been carrying sand to the shallot beds; but as the work is too heavy when it is so hot, they have already gone home.

(M) We talk to a farmer with about 30 wells on about half an acre of shallot beds, who is today employing 8 male labourers to plant seed from Togo. He says that the land, not the beds, was pledged to him by an old man about two years ago and that if the debtor were to redeem the land, he would probably continue to have the beds on *damee* - otherwise he would have to find some other *damee* landlord. [We subsequently learn that he is involved in litigation over his beds - a rare occurrence.] One son and 7 labourers (who are also farmers) are working on his land today. He financed the digging of the wells and he knows that if the old landlord were to die the inheritor would come to some agreement with him over this. He owns shallot beds in two other localities. (As he is talking, he hoes continuously.)

(N) This Anloga farmer owns few beds; he is planting them with seed he grew himself. The beds are about 40 ft long. He says that bat manure is obtained from ceilings north of the lagoon. Both bat and cattle manure are applied before sowing; fish manure, which he buys from a passing 'contractor',

is applied on top, after germination.

(O) This farmer does not regret having pledged most of his shallot beds some 4 years ago. He says he produces about 2 1/2 *tadeka* per bed.

(P) As many as 47 beds have been pledged to him, from which he gets a yield of some 100 *tadeka*. He still has supplies of Togo seed. Today he is employing about 10 labourers, for wages of 3s from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. He also has beds elsewhere. Fish is an essential manure; the cost of a bag is £2, which serves for many beds. There are no boundaries or marks of any kind; everyone knows whose beds are whose.

(Q) Here is a farmer with 2 beds pledged to him; he says he has about 60 beds elsewhere. He is just stopping work for the day - before 11 a.m. Bat manure costs about 33s to 35s per bag, compared with 4s 6d for cattle manure. While he might get about 300 *tadeka* in the better (*kele*) season, his yield would be lower during this (the *femu*) season.

(R) Women are hastily picking pepper from some of this farmer's beds so that they may be cleared for shallots. Much maize remains unharvested, preventing the sowing of shallots; it may have to be pulled up before it has ripened. Many beds, in different places, have been pledged to him.

10th May. On the road before Anloga

(S) He says that he helps an old man by renting 8 beds on *damee* from him. He has 'a hundred beds' elsewhere and only happened to call here today. This land came from his grandfather, and his brothers also have some. He employs people for weeding: 3s from 7 to 11 a.m. and he may give them some food. (He weeds as we talk.) Referring to the concept of *agbadoho*, he says this applies to shallot beds as well as to seine fishing; it is essential. You may borrow from the fishing *agbadoho* for the sake of the shallot *agbadoho* - or *vice versa*. You may borrow your starting capital for your *agbadoho* from a friend or relative and when you have repaid this sum you can start your own fund. *Agbadoho* must be kept in a separate place. Although you can borrow from the *agbadoho* to build a house, if you want to build a mighty mansion you must not make use of the whole fund at once; rather should you borrow a regular sum monthly. So far as he knows there is no other word for *agbadoho* - their grandfathers used it. He keeps no written records; the expenses for both the *damee* and *agbadoho* accounts are kept in his head.



(T) Standing with us while we talk to (S) is (S)'s father's sister's son. He has 15 beds nearby; also 50 further on towards Anloga and 40 on the seaward side towards Keta. All these beds came from his 'grandfathers'; he has got his mother's father's beds and father's father's beds, because as an active worker he has been asked to take charge. It's his duty to provide employment for any relative who wants it. 'Formerly property passed to sisters' sons' - this is now entirely abolished.' After a grandfather's property has been divided between sons then it stays in each son's line. But, 'if you are not grown your uncle is to control it until you are grown'. It is for the elders to decide whether the beds of a sonless man should pass to a daughter. Women are never real farmers; if they inherit farms or are obliged to look after them, they will put them out on *damee* or give them to their sons.

#### 10th May. Anloga

(U) *Kwao Mensah*, an Anloga farmer, invites us to his house. He says that in each 'district' there are head shallot farmers who are responsible for fixing sowing dates, the main justification for which is the risk of insect infestation from late crops. About six weeks, or so, before sowing is due to begin the head farmer announces the date; there is also a closing date, which is not fixed in advance, but which is never more than two months after the start, depending on the rainfall. The number of seasons on the lagoon side varies with the location of the beds; but sowing in April, August and January (or thenabouts) is fairly common, irrigation being invariably required with the August (*kele*) and January (*fedomi*) seasons. Different dates are fixed for beds on the seaward side where, in this locality, there are effectively two, not three, seasons.

He formerly had more than 100 beds, but now only 10 to 15 as 'the flood water is worrying me on both sides of the road'. [This, presumably, means that he lacks the cash to pay for sand carrying to build up his beds.]

His beds came to him from his maternal grandfather (Anygla); as he had no sons, some of his beds passed to his daughters, some to his brothers and their sons, and some to his sisters. Women don't farm their own beds, this being men's work; they put out their farms on *damee*.

When, at one time, he was the bosun of a fishing company he had to put out his shallot beds on *damee*. It is partly because so many farmers go to distant places like Abidjan with their fishing nets that *damee* is so common.



He stores his shallot seed in the ceiling; he is now lucky to have seed from a new source in Togo, which he bought last Christmas; he has an insecticide sprayer, and if there is no insect trouble this seed will last for 5 years.

His wife sells the shallots in either Anloga or Keta markets, where prices are much the same. Usually they prefer not to store the harvested shallots, once they have been dried, peeled and tied in heads; this is because of the risk of insect infestation. But the peeling, or skinning, may be delayed for a month or more after harvest. A man calls us to watch the skinning of some of last season's shallots; we watch him and some women sitting doing this work which improves the appearance of the *tadeka* - which is a charming pink colour - and which exposes the bad shallots. (Seed shallots, for storage, are not skinned.)

### 13th May. Near the road between Keta and Anloga

(V) This very old man claims that his father had owned 500 shallot beds having been the son of a 'great farmer'; he had grown shallots, maize and cassava on the lagoon side, east of Anloga. His father lived in Anloga village, but he removed out here, where there is a great area of coconut round his house, which is all for him.

He claims that he never puts out shallot beds on *damee*, although he has no stocks of seed owing to the closure of the Ghana/Togo frontier; he had sold his own seed, he hadn't realised there would be so much trouble. Sometimes, before the closure, he used to go and buy seed in Togo; at other times Togo people came to sell to him; then, again, another farmer might have gone to buy for him if he had helped him with transport.

Yes, he knows about *agbadoho*: he has [or had?] a fund for his shallots. When his father died the whole *agbadoho* came to him as he was the oldest son; but as he already had his own *agbadoho* he gave it to his brothers. Yes, *agbadoho* is indivisible; it may disappear, but it would never be deliberately divided.

He owns some nets. One net is in continuous use, being controlled by his son, who is the bosun. He has so many nets; so many he doesn't know how many; for all he knows his son may have bought another.

13th May. Anloga

(W) This very old woman owns shallot beds which had originally belonged to her grandfather. It's true that it's unusual for a woman who has brothers to inherit beds, but it can happen if the family so decides. Now, owing to old age, she has passed all the work to her son; but when she was younger she farmed herself and never gave out her beds on *damee*. Her beds are in three localities - perhaps 100 altogether.

She remembers the time when there were no labourers on the shallot beds; farmers then helped each other under a rotating system - *va do fi nam fidodo* - which still occurs occasionally, though labour employment is far more common. You had to provide food, but no money like today. The labourers are all farmers or their sons; there is no labouring class - 'we don't want someone like *kayakaya* [market carriers] as labourers'. [This means that all the strangers in Anloga, of whom there are a fair number, are traders, carriers, etc.] 'You may not have sufficient shallot beds, but if it is possible you have at least one.' Someone says that every fisherman has some kind of a farm, but not necessarily a shallot bed. Everyone should have a lagoon fishing net.

## CLASSIFIED EWE GLOSSARY

N.B. The orthography has been anglicised since several Ewe letters would be difficult to render conveniently here and since Ewe fishermen who write in English often use such orthography themselves.

### SECTION I: SEINE FISHING

#### 1. NETS (marine only)

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>yevudor</i> ( <i>yevudo</i> ) | The normal beach-seine net. See Hill (1970: 35). The literal meaning being 'European net' ( <i>yevu</i> is white man), the net may be an adapted form of a seine net introduced to Eweland by Europeans in the last century - see de Surgy (1966: 17) and also Hill ( <i>ibid</i> : 44, n.1.). De Surgy thinks that the ordinary large <i>yevudor</i> may have had wings of some 1,800 to 2,000 ft long. In 1963 nylon nets were rapidly replacing cotton. See Grove (1966: 412) |
| <i>deyido</i>                    | A small seine for catching <i>deyi</i>   |
| <i>yevudovi</i>                  | A small seine - lit. 'the child of <i>yevudor</i> ' (De Surgy: <i>ibid</i> , 47)   |
| <i>do</i>                        | The general word for net   |
| <i>fafado</i>                    | Probably the largest type of seine net, designed for catching <i>fafa</i> , with wings some 3,000 ft long. (It is to be noted that net owners do not necessarily know how long their nets are.) See Grove ( <i>ibid</i> : 412)   |
| <i>ali</i>                       | A big net of variable length, which is particularly used for catching <i>deyi</i> , and which may be used in a lagoon; not a seine net   |

## 2. NET OWNER

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>doto</i>       | Net owner proper                    |
| <i>afeto</i>      | A net owner's representative        |
| <i>dokplolawo</i> | A net owner's company (obsolescent) |

## 3. NET HIRING SYSTEMS

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>mavee</i>    | From <i>ma</i> (divide) <i>evi</i> (two). A system such that a net owner who is unable or unwilling to operate his net for any reason lets it to someone who will be entitled to receive half of the (net) cash proceeds from selling fish, i.e. the gross proceeds less expenses; the costs of net repairs during the fishing season are met by the net owner. See Hill (1970: 40). See, also <i>damee</i> - II (1) below. |
| <i>kofetowo</i> | A system such that someone hires a net for a season to take it to another beach, there being no standard division of the proceeds.  |

## 4. FISH (sea)

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | De Surgy (1966: 46) lists the scientific, French, English and Ewe names for 17 types of sea fish which are sometimes included in the seine catch. As most of them are very rare, I mention only - |
| <i>deyi</i>                 | Given the scientific name of <i>sardinella aurita</i> provided by de Surgy, it is a small, possibly sardine-like fish - surely not a herring as de Surgy suggests?                                |
| <i>fafa</i><br><i>afafa</i> | <i>Carranx hippos</i> - horse mackerel  |

## 5. MEMBERS OF FISHING COMPANIES

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>amega</i>        | Bosun <sup>1</sup> the most prominent company member - a general word for 'elder'.   |
| <i>amega avelia</i> | Second or deputy bosun   |
| <i>yelewonua</i>    | Obsolete word for bosun  |
| (Secretary)         | I heard of no Ewe word for this important crew member, who has many functions, including record-keeping; he is sometimes called a clerk. |
| <i>achidoto</i>     | The captain of the canoe which carries the net out to sea.   |
| <i>dofula</i>       | The crew's representative; the petty officer.  |
| <i>vukulawo</i>     | The canoe paddlers <sup>2</sup>  |
| <i>kadzikipola</i>  | 'Caretaker' of the rope.   |

## 6. THE DIVISION OF THE PROCEEDS FROM SELLING THE CATCH

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <i>vumega</i> | The canoeists' share   |
| <i>dosega</i> | The regular net-menders' share   |
| <i>nuviga</i> | Small extra sums given to the most industrious fishermen or to non-members of the company            |
| <i>vutega</i> | A little extra for those who arrive early in the morning to push the canoe down the beach to the sea |

---

<sup>1</sup> Following local Ewe usage, I here render the abbreviation of 'boatswain' thus - not, as more properly, bos'n.

<sup>2</sup> In 1963 the seine fishermen seldom used outboard motors - as they were soon to do.

## 7. FISHING GEAR inc. NETTING

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <i>vu</i>      | A canoe - or any other kind of boat         |
| <i>ka</i>      | Rope  |
| <i>kazi</i>    | Coil of rope                                |
| <i>kotoku</i>  | The bag fixed to the wings of the seine net |
| <i>ganuvi</i>  | Spare or additional portions of netting     |
| <i>agbo</i>    | A very small mesh                           |
| <i>adator</i>  | 1 1/2 inch mesh                             |
| <i>alorgba</i> | 2 1/2 inch mesh                             |

## 8. THE CAPITAL FUND

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>agbadoho</i> | From <i>agba</i> (a load), <i>do</i> (money or wealth) The central fund of capital which sustains and maintains the net. See Hill (1970: 41-3) and II (3) below |
|-----------------|---|

## 9. WOMEN

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>doto aro</i>   | The 'wives' - i.e. the women, whether actual wives or not, who are attached to particular crew members, and who are responsible for fish-selling and preserving and for cooking |
| <i>doto srowo</i> | The headwoman   |
| <i>xelatowo</i>   | Unattached women fish buyers who come to the beach - from <i>xela</i> , beg, "those who keep begging and begging and asking"  |



## SECTION II: SHALLOT FARMING

### 1. LAND TENURE, FARMING

*anyigba* Land

*damee*<sup>3</sup> A system such that the shallot harvest is divided in halves between the 'bed-owner' and tenant, after the deduction of expenses. An older word than *mavee* - I (3) above

*agbledada* The straightforward renting of shallot beds

*agble* Farm

*agbledea* Farmer

*agbleto* Farm owner

### 2. COMMUNAL FARMING

*va do fi nam fidodo* A system under which shallot farmers used to help each other on their farms in turns, no cash payment being involved; the system persists on a very small scale

### 3. THE CAPITAL FUND

*agbadoho* See I (8) above. Ideally, fishing and shallot-farming funds should be kept distinct at least in their owners' heads - though they may 'borrow' from each other

---

<sup>3</sup> Some writers - such as Nukunya (1975: 62-3) - make a distinction between *damee* and *famee* in this context, but Hukporti did not mention the latter word.

#### 4. MEASURE OF LENGTH

*abadeka* An 'arm stretch' or double yard - *deka* being 'one'

#### 5. SHALLOT BUNDLING

*sasadeka* Six (or so) small bundles of shallots tied together

*tadeka* Otherwise known as a 'head', this enormous 'bundle', which is the usual unit of wholesaling, consists of twenty *sasadeka*, or roughly 120 small bundles. (But there is more variation in these quantities than is usually admitted.) Nukunya (1975: p.66) puts the average weight at 30 lbs - somewhat lighter according to my informants. See Nukunya (1969: Plate 4)

#### 6. SHALLOT GROWING SEASONS<sup>4</sup>

*fedomi* January to March (dry season)

*femu* April to July (wet season)

*kele* August or September to November (relatively dry season)

#### 7. DEBT AND CREDIT

*woba* The pledging of anything, including shallot beds

*feto* Either a creditor or a debtor

---

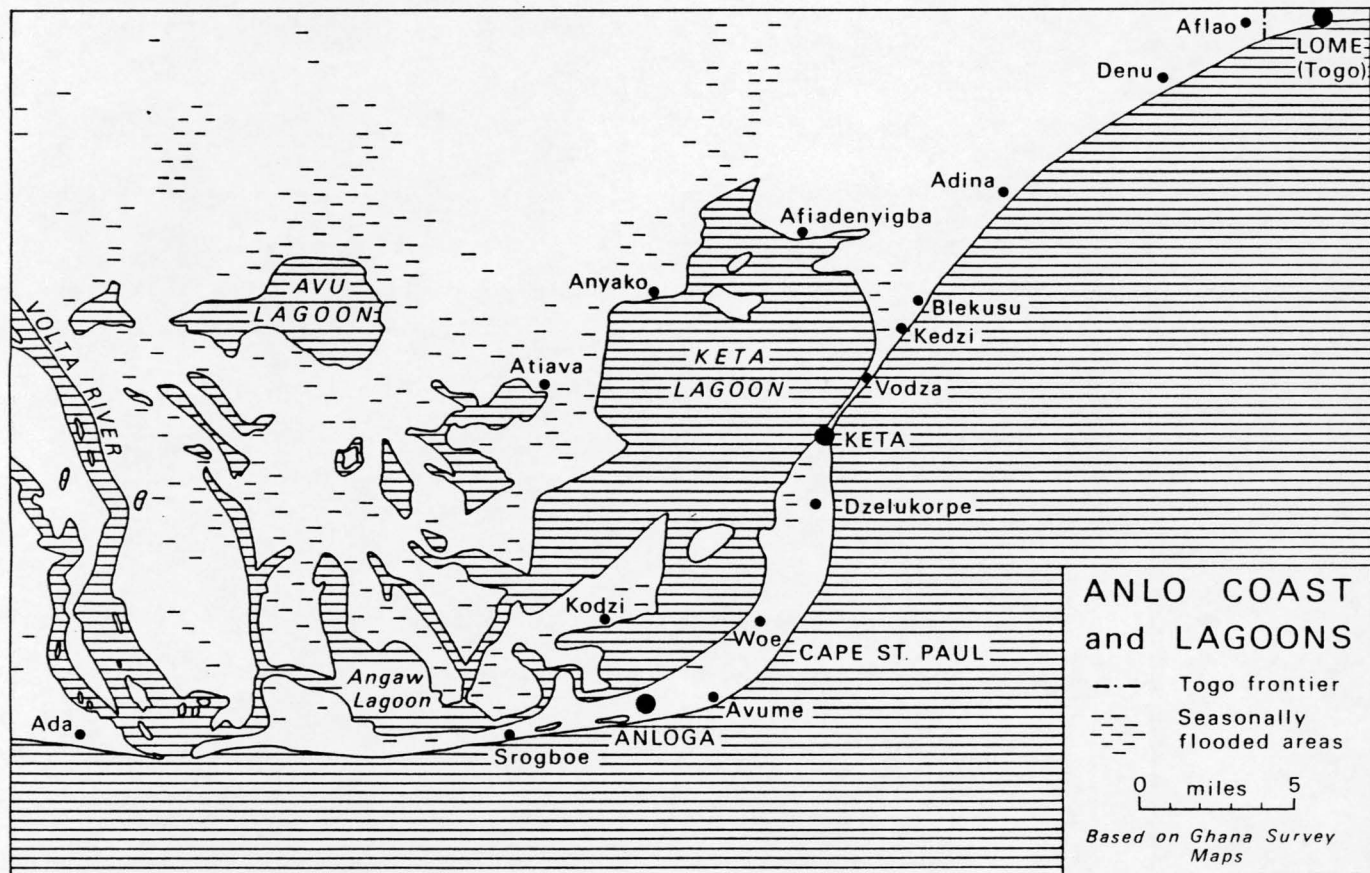
<sup>4</sup> These seasons are less fixed than is often asserted; and in some localities it is too wet for *femu* to exist at all.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

N.B. Much fuller bibliographies are provided elsewhere, particularly in Grove (1966) and Hill (1970).

- Alexander, P.                      *Sri Lankan Fishermen: Rural Capitalism and Peasant Society*, A.N.U. Monographs on South Asia, No.7, A.N.U., Canberra, 1982
- Chisholm, N.G.                    *Response of some Rural Communities in South-East Ghana to Economic Recession 1982*, Cambridge African Monographs, No.2, African Studies Centre, Cambridge, 1983.
- Goody, J.R. ed.                    *Changing Social Structure in Ghana*, International African Institute, London, 1975
- Grove, Jean M.                    'Some Aspects of the Economy of the Volta Delta (Ghana)', *Bulletin de l'IFAN*, January to April, 1966
- Hill, Polly                         'Pan African Fishermen', 28 Dec. 1963 and 4 Jan. 1964
- 'Notes on the Socio-Economic Organization of the Anloga Shallot-Growing Industry'. University of Ghana, 1965, (cyclostyled).
- Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa*, Chap.3, 'Ewe Seine Fishermen', Cambridge University Press, 1970
- Dry Grain Farming Families*, Cambridge University Press, 1982
- Indigenous Trade and Market Places in Ghana, 1962-64*, Jos Oral History and Literature Texts, University of Jos, Nigeria, 1985
- Development Economics on Trial: The Anthropological Case for a Prosecution*, Cambridge University Press, 1986

- Irvine, F.R. *The Fishes and Fisheries of the Gold Coast*, Crown Agents, 1947
- Nukunya, G.K. *Kinship and Marriage among the Anlo Ewe*, University of London, the Athlone Press, 1969
- 'The Effects of Cash Crops on an Ewe Community' in Goody (1975)
- Quansah, S.T. 'The Shallot Industry'. *New Gold Coast Farmer*, I, 2, 1956-7
- de Surgy, A. *Les pêcheurs de Côte d'Ivoire*; Tome 1, Fascicule 1, *Les pêcheurs Anlo*. Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, distributed by IFAN, Paris, 1965 (cyclostyled)
- La pêche traditionnelle sur le littoral Evhe et Mina. (De l'embouchure de la Volta au Dahomey)*, Groupe de Chercheurs Africanistes, Paris, 1966 (cyclostyled)
- Wills, J.B. *Agriculture and Land Use in Ghana*, Oxford University Press, 1962





A prosperous net owner





Fishermen by canoes





The canoe is beached



The catch is landed



Hauling the seine net





The net is dried on the beach



Carrying the seine net



Women fish-traders on the beach

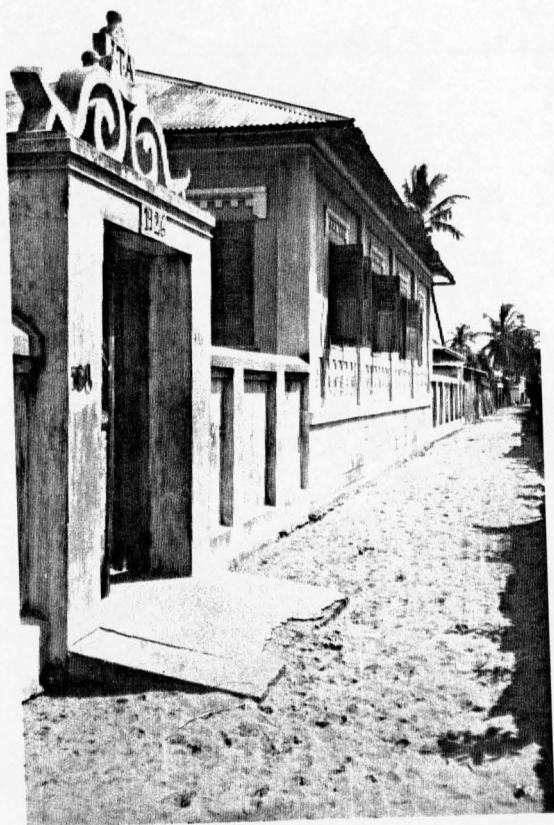


Ovens for smoking fish



A fisherman in front of the crew's quarters on the beach





A pleasant house in Keta



Working on shallot beds - note erosion



A shallot farmer at work

# INDEX

- 'Abidjan'
  - migration to, 11, 12, 20-1, 31
- advances
  - to company members, 10, 12, 21, 23, 34, 36
- agbadoho*, capital fund, 9, 18-9, 19, 21-2, 22-3, 25, 28, 30, 32, 38, 47, 49
- ali*, net, 12, 22
- bosuns, 9, 14, 15, 32
- Botianaw, 35-8
- canoes, 13, 16, 18, 27, 38
- Chisholm, N.G., 8
- companies
  - of seine fishermen, 10, 27
  - accounting systems, 13, 14, 22, 24
  - and division of proceeds, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 27, 28, 30, 37
- currency
  - indigenous, and women, 17, 20
- Dahomey (Benin), 11, 12, 14, 15, 23
- damee*, renting of shallot beds, 40, 43, 44, 45-6, 48
- divorce, 26
- fish
  - preservation, 37
  - sale of, on beach, 15, 16, 22, 24, 27

fishing gear

sale of second-hand, 11, 29, 30

shops selling, 29-30, 39

Hukporti, Felix, 7, 24-7, 34

indebtedness

fishermen's, 34

*see also* pledging

inheritance

of seine nets, 9, 13, 18, 25-6, 30

of shallot beds, 45, 48, 50

interest rate, 34, 44

Keta

flooding of, 7

labourers

on shallot beds, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 50

Lagos, 11, 13

manure

for shallot beds, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46-7

*mavee*, system of net renting, 11, 13, 25, 28, 29, 30, 35

migration

of seine fishermen, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 35-8

net owners, 9, 28, 49

women, 11, 25

Nukunya, G.K., 40-1

pledging

of shallot beds, 42, 44

renting

of shallot beds, 44

rubber

collection, 16

secretaries

of seine companies, 12, 24-5, 27-9

seine fishing

ancient, 8

and companies, 10

proceeds from, 33

work routine, 24-5

*see also* companies, seine nets

seine nets

cost of, 9, 29, 36

creation of, 11

'immortality' of, 11, 18, 26, 35

inheritance of, 9, 13, 18, 25-6, 30

mesh sizes, 29, 39

nylon, 9, 11, 30

repair of, 11

value of catch, 15, 35

*see also* yevudor

shallots

bought in ground, 42

bundling of, 43, 46

sale of, 49

seed, 42, 43, 44-5, 49

sowing dates, 42-3, 48

shallot beds, 40-1, 42

and *damee*, 40, 43, 44, 45-6, 48

inheritance of, 45, 48, 50

pledging of, 43, 44, 46, 47

renting of, 43, 44, 46, 47

shallot farmers

income, 43

Surgy, A. de, 7, 9



wells

on shallot beds, 43, 44, 46

Wills, J.B., 40

women

net owners, 11, 25

and seine companies, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 31, 32, 35-6,  
37

*yevudor*, seine net, 8, 16, 29

## Cambridge African Monographs

**Uganda's First Republic: Administrators and Politicians, 1967-1971**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 1) Edited by A.F. Robertson

ISBN 0-902993-08-9

**Response of Some Rural Communities in South-East Ghana to Economic Recession 1982**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 2) By N.G. Chisholm

ISBN 0-902993-09-7

**Irrigation in Tropical Africa: Problems and Problem-Solving**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 3) Edited by W.M. Adams and A.T. Grove

ISBN 0-902993-10-0

**Villagers, Villages and the State in Modern Tanzania**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 4) Edited by R.G. Abrahams

ISBN 0-902993-11-9

**Conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Introductory Bibliography for the Social Sciences**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 5) Compiled by J.A. Seeley

ISBN 0-902993-12-7

**Talking With Ewe Seine Fishermen and Shallot Farmers**

(Cambridge African Monographs, No. 6) Recording and editing by Polly Hill

ISBN 0-902993-17-8

# Cambridge African Occasional Papers

**Famine in Africa: A Guide to Bibliographies and Resource Centres**  
(Cambridge African Occasional Papers, No. 1) Compiled by J.A. Seeley  
ISBN 0-902993-13-5

**Annual Reports of Bende Division, South Eastern Nigeria, 1905-1912**  
(Cambridge African Occasional Papers, No. 2) By G.I. Jones  
ISBN 0-902993-14-3

**Famine in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Select Bibliography (Excluding the Sahel) From 1978**  
(Cambridge African Occasional Papers, No. 3) Compiled by J.A. Seeley  
ISBN 0-902993-15-1

**H.R.G. Howman on Provincialisation in Rhodesia 1968-1969 and Rational and Irrational Elements**  
(Cambridge African Occasional Papers, No. 4) Edited by G.C. Passmore  
ISBN 0-902993-16-X

Copies of Centre publications can be obtained from the Secretary, African Studies Centre, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RQ, England.