

# Domestic Pottery Forms, Names And Functions Among The Eve Of The Volta Region In Ghana

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*Abstract: Domestic pottery as the name implies, are those that are made specifically for use in the home. These include pots, bowls and dishes modelled to suit the functions they are intended for and in line with traditional aesthetic values. Generally, the names are closely associated with a range of household activities and in most cases, the circumference of the mouth and the size of the body determines what the vessels are supposed to be used for. The predominant shape of pots produced by Eve potters is round or circular purposely made for fetching and storing water, general cooking and storing food substances while bowls and dishes are made for grinding and serving food, mixing substances and roasting cereals and tubers. It is unfortunate to find that most people who patronize these pots do not have adequate knowledge about the ideas closely associated with the names and usage. This study therefore seeks to identify the domestic pottery forms and how they are used in the home to enhance the quality of life. The study utilized the descriptive and explanatory techniques under the qualitative research method. The main finding is that Eve pottery forms determine the kind of domestic activities people engage in. Pottery is also regarded as life-sustaining objects, such that, this idea is fully clad in the shape modelled and used by the people. This emphasizes the fact that irrespective of the form and what pottery is used for, it is well thought-out as enhancing life.*

*Keywords: Domestic pottery, Eve pottery, Eve pots, Eve potters, pottery forms, life-sustaining objects.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

A great variety of pottery containers are produced to meet the demands of daily life activities in indigenous societies, precisely Ghana. The varied shapes and sizes modelled determine to a large extent how the pots are used. These may be grouped as domestic, commercial, prestigious and religious pots. It is in the interest of the this paper to explore the forms, names and uses of pots.

In building pots, the potter creates the shape and size desired for a particular purpose. For example, small wide pots are made for cooking relish while rounded deeper pots are used for cooking maize meal in larger quantities (Aguilar, 2007). The most common shapes of pots are oval, semicircular and circular serving numerous domestic needs. These include,

cooking pots, water storage and palm wine pots, eating bowls and ceremonial pots.

Amenuke, et al., (1991) noted that, indigenous Ghanaian pottery assumes the shapes of oval, spherical or half-spherical. Oval-shaped pots are used as washing and palm-wine containers. Water for drinking is stored in the spherical-shaped pot while the half-sphere pots are used for serving food and storing pomade.

The circular shapes of pots are link up with the concept of containment. A Kono potter in Sierra Leone rates a good pot in terms of its roundness or if it can contain. In forming pots, there is an emphasis on maintaining a round mouth. In justifying this fact, Kono potters explained that the form of the pot seizes to be a pot if it did not assume the round shape, in other words if it could not contain (Arnoldi, Geary and

Hardin, 1996). Essentially, this concept stresses the idea that pots must be modelled to merit the quality needed to hold substances. In effect, this idea pervades the technicality involved in making pots not only in the Kono but definitely in other pot making cultures such as among the Eve people.

Rattray (1927) gave more detailed account of uses of some pots and utensils in the Asante language. These include; *Anane*, for melting shea butter; *Kuruwa*, a proverb pot meant for holding drinking water; *Ahena*, a large pot used for carrying water from the stream; *Osene*, a cooking pot; *Tasenaba*, soup pot; *Akotokyewa*, palm wine pot; *Nkyeryeresa*, literally 'three steps' pot and *mogyemogyee*, a jaw bone pot, both used for religious or ceremonial purposes; *Abusua kuruwa*, family pot; *Ayowa*, pot for washing the soul; *Abammo* and *kuna kuku*, widows' pot. Apart from these, fragments of pots are used for roasting groundnuts, carrying live charcoal and refuse, rims of old pots serve as stands for making fresh pots as well as using cracked pots for storing cotton, groundnuts, etc.

According to Arnoldi, Geary and Hardin (1996), pottery vessels can be placed into three major groups. These include, closed (or restricted) vessels intended for the transport and storage of beverages; open vessels meant for the cooking of food or boiling of water; and vessels considered to be imitations of imported vessels designed for consumption. In essence, the functions of pots give order and form to the shapes that are made. Obviously, the emphasis on the mouth of pots categorizes the use they are put to.

Priddy (1974) outlined a number of pots and how they are used. These include: huge jars for brewing and storing corn-beer and water; smaller jars for fetching water, corn beer measure pot; water coolers; cooking pots; mixing bowls; food and soup bowls; colanders; wash hand bowls; shea butter jars; water holding pots for ducks and chicken; animal troughs; lamp containers; globular pots smeared with cow dung and herbs to attract ants to feed chicken; vegetable grinding bowls, circular patty-pans for frying corn-cakes; ritual pots with lids; globular pots with lids and ventilation for storing salt and meat; tiny toy pots for children.

It is important to find out whether potters use their imagination alone or get their ideas from some other sources. Speight and Toki (1999) notes that potters draw their ideas from the surroundings. Since they live close to the earth, they have responsive fingers which they use in activities such as planting, reaping, sorting and grinding food. Thus, their pottery reflects the sensitivity of the fingers used in the manipulation of the clay into pots. Also, potters are aware of animal postures and movements they find around them, so, from time to time, they mould pots to assume simple, exaggerated or distorted shapes of furry and feathered animals. Also, forms are made based on containers fashioned from other materials, e.g. metal. Again, some forms result from the feelings of the potter paying attention to relationship between the rim and the base.

The gourd, one of the plant sources which is commonly used as a container influenced many pottery forms (Nelson, 1984). In agreement, Perani and Smith (1998) states that one of the most elegant types of Nupe pots is a large hourglass vessel based on a gourd shape, used for storing water and palm wine. Additionally, the utilitarian vessels appear to

reveal the shape of a gourd or basket deeply rooted in African tradition. Priddy (1974) also reveals that a Kusasi potter in Nakum, east of Bawku in Ghana, makes pots imitating the shape of a gourd instead of the normal types rather. The potter explained that the idea spontaneously emerged one day when she was making pots, and that they were selling very well so she had stopped making the normal shapes. However, the designs have no meaning. In brief, ideas for making pots are somehow drawn from the environment; both natural and artificial sources.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The design used in this research is the qualitative type adopting the descriptive and explanatory methods. The interview and the observation instruments were used to gather data. The interview was very useful since most of the indigenous potters were illiterates and would certainly have difficulty with the English language. Apart from the traditional face-to-face method of gathering data, the telephone was also utilised. For the purpose of this paper, personal interviews were conducted in all the pottery centres. First of all, a draft interview guide was prepared in English and pre-tested in four pottery centres to find out whether the respondents understood the questions. From the answers given, the pre-test interview revealed unanticipated problems with question wording, repetitive questioning, etc. Also, it was difficult to translate the questions from English to Eve on the spot. However, with the help of specialists, the questions were translated directly into Eve.

Next was the actual interview in all the centres which was preceded by self-introduction, explanation of the purpose of the interview and how the opinions of respondents would be treated. The kind of rapport that was needed for the respondents to tolerate and willingly answer questions was also established. Structured and semi-structured questions were used to guide the subjects in providing answers in their own words.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) reveal that, in a structured interview, "the researcher asks a standard set of questions and nothing more. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher may follow the standard questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe a person's reasoning" (p. 184). It was necessary to have an interview schedule to maintain consistency in data and to ensure that respondents do not deviate from the research topic. However, follow-up questions to elicit in-depth views from respondents were also used.

Apart from this, the open-ended interview which is more flexible and has no formal schedule of questions but only topics to explore was employed. The recording of responses from respondents was on the spot through note-taking and with the aid of a tape recorder to obtain a more detailed and comprehensive data which otherwise would be difficult to capture through writing only. Where there was doubt of some facts after leaving the field, the telephone was used to find out from the respondents.

Observation was used as a tool to obtain data through direct examination. This allowed direct interact with potters in

their work environment. It involved a critical look or watching carefully on-the-spot the way pots and bowls were made although no active part was played in the modelling process. The observation was supported by the use of a digital camera to capture the pots.

Out of a total of 18 districts, 6 were selected as the representative population. From a sample frame of 6 districts, 12 pottery centres were selected as indicated in the Map 1 and Table 1 respectively. In each pottery centre 14 respondents were picked. These included female potters of at least 35 years and elderly men over 60 years who have in-depth knowledge about pottery over the years. The criterion for inclusion was based on: the geographical location and how it affects the making of pottery forms and uses of pots; availability of clay as the main material in the area; nature of domestic activities women particularly engage in.



Map 1: Selected Pottery Centres

No	District	Pottery Centre
1	North Dayi	Kpando Bame
2	Adaklu Anyigbe	Agotime Adedome
3	Akatsi	Ave-Dzalele, Ahihladzi
4	North Ketu	Dzodze Kuli, Dzogbefime, Fiagbedu, Kpodoave, Zomayi
5	North Tongu	Adidome Todze, Vume Klokofe
6	South Tongu	Vume

Table 1: Selected Pottery Centres (Sample)

The simple random and cluster sampling methods were employed in order to obtain a manageable segment of the population. The simple random method was used because it

consists of a simple and systematic procedure. It ensures that each subject has an equal chance of being selected. The cluster sampling method was also used for the fact that all clusters (districts) have similar characteristics.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. POTTERY FORMS

The making of round shapes of pots and bowls as claimed by Eve potters is a skill inherited from the ancestors. The idea of round shapes is that of a receptacle, able to contain substances. It is like the stomach which looks insignificant on the exterior yet when filled, it is able to hold enough substances. Making round pots is *denu* or *dekɔnu* (tradition). Potters in Adedome claim this is the only way pots have been made since they were born and they have also carried it out to date. The round shapes are said to be more convenient and able to hold much substances as well as fit perfectly on the swish stove. The round shape is said to be a shape of convenience and for generations, they have been repeated. It is therefore a shape that has been accepted as the most ideal over the ages and that is why potters cannot stop making them. The mind in conjunction with the eye is used to determine sizes of pottery. Potters support this idea with the fact that the shapes are formed in the mind before they emerge.

The continuous making of circular pots is a matter of preserving the tradition of mothers. Potters have embraced the round shapes for the reason that they have attributes of motherhood. This is because mothers make their own pots as well as use them to suit the activities of daily life they engage in within and without the home. The making of round pots is traditional and still prominent because it is considered 'whole' in nature. Anything that is whole is complete and perfect. Thus, a pot can only be complete after making several circular movements around it. The observance of nature reveals so many important things taking up the same round shape, e.g. the sun and moon. The round shape is therefore closest to nature than any other shape (M. Amezado and D. Asafo, personal communication, 2010).

To potters at Kpando Bame, size, as regards quantity, is vital in the design and making of round shapes. Thus, the capacity of a pot is closely tied to the round shape made. On the exterior, pots look small but in reality they are huge and characterised by what the Eve call *eto* (depth) when filled to capacity. The round shapes are also considered well balanced and stable when placed on the "swish stove", carried on the head to fetch water and placed in shallow hollows on the ground to store drinking water (F. Tette, personal communication, 2010).

Furthermore, there is a relationship between women potters and the shape of pots. Mama Tette of Kpando Bame (personal communication, 2010) affirmed that the round shape is similar to a pregnancy which undergoes a number of developments until birth. Similarly, pots undergo a number of similar processes before they emerge finally as containers. Additionally, plants such as gourd and calabash have comparable shapes and are used just like pots. From the assertion of potters, pots can be attributed to containers of life.

All kinds of pots made in Kpando Bame are generally referred to as *anyigbaze* (pots made on the ground). Initially, pots were called *zɔ*, (large and immovable storage vessels) that were mainly used regularly in the distant past. However, as other pots emerged, the name was changed to *ze* to imply a container for all substances.

Potters from Ave-Dzalele believe that though the width of a rim determines the size of a pot, pots are measured according to the number of gallons of water they can contain. A normal cooking pot can contain a gallon of water. The smallest pot called *zevi* contains about a third of a gallon. The potters also affirmed that although their grandmothers were able to make forms equivalent to the barrel, they are unable to make such huge forms today. They cited a number of reasons which they think were the secrets of their predecessors. These include strict adherence to taboos; taking time to compose the clay body; and allowing the pots in the green ware stage to dry under room temperature at least three months before they are fired. The sizes of pottery are not associated with any man-made or natural objects but are determined by experience. Within the mind of the potter, she knows what size of pot to make at any time and so she fetches her clay exactly so to cater for the various sizes.

According to Da Mana, personal communication, (2010) before the grandmother, Mama Sodolo introduced *soju* (gari roasting bowl), large pieces of broken *ezɔ* (outsize pots) were used for all kinds of roasting purposes. Mothers of old believed to have discovered the round shapes, built them to accommodate the swinging and turning action of the substances roasted in them. As such, bowls formed assume that shape in the mind of the potter relative to how and what they are used for. Again, the round shapes remain balanced when placed on the “swish stove.” There is therefore an assurance of even distribution of heat and capacity of bowls to withstand long hours of cooking without damage.

Three sizes of bowls can be identified, (corn roasting bowl), large and outsize (gari roasting bowls). The large and outsize bowls are not done according to any standardized measurement but by the use of the eye and the mass of clay. In this vein, the idea of visualizing the sizes by the potter even before the process of making the bowl commences is paramount. Also, the dimensions of the “swish stove” are used as a standard for the sizes.

## B. USES OF POTTERY

Eve pottery consists of a range of pots, bowls, dishes, basins and swish stoves (local stove). They can be classified as follows; domestic, ceremonial, figurative and proverbial. Generally, the names are closely associated with the various household activities and religious practices. In most cases, the circumference of the mouth and the size of the body determine what the pot is supposed to be used for. For the purpose of this paper only domestic pots would be considered.

Besides specializing in specific aspects of pottery, Eve potters can be accredited for making other domestic pots for use in the home. Within the domestic domain, nearly every pottery centre make pots purposely for fetching and storing water; general cooking, steaming and preparing soups; tapping and storing palm-wine; boiling medicinal herbs; storing food

substances; etc. Bowls of varied sizes are also made for grinding and serving food; mixing substances such as palm-wine; for roasting cereals, tubers, etc.

### a. WATER POTS

Water pots range from storage, fetching and drinking. The names assigned to storage pots do not really reflect on the word. They are rather linked with the size referred to as *ezɔgã* (outsized pot) in Plate 1, or placement as *anyigbaze* (ground pot) as in Plate 2, or death as *ekuze* (death pot) in Plate 3 respectively.



Plate 1: Ezɔgã



Plate 2: Anyigbaze



Plate 3:

On the contrary, *tomedeze* (water fetching pot) in Plate 4 is specifically used for fetching water from the stream. Interestingly, on one hand *tsinoze* (drinking pot) shown in Plate 5 reflects the name of its true use and on the other hand it is either placement *kplɔdzize* (table pot) as in Plate 6 or *zɔgɔmeze/afɔtize* (footed pot) all serving the purpose of a pot one drinks from. Pots used for fetching and storing water are among the biggest and are still being produced by potters from Kpando Bame, Agotime Adedome, Ave Dzalele and Vume.



Plate 4:  
Tomedeze



Plate 5:  
Tsinoze



Plate 6:  
Kplɔdzize

### b. COOKING POTS

The most widely produced and most popular pots among the Eves are those in the category of cooking, e.g. pots for soup, general cooking, steaming, herbs and hot water. They are also used for all kinds of rites and ceremonies such as *gbɔto* (puberty rites), *venɔvikɔnu* (twin rites), etc. Those centres that make soup pots agreed on the name of *detsize* (palm nut soup pot) in Plate 7 for the preparation of soup in general apart from Todze and Vume who name the soup pot as *kutu* (Plate 8). The name *kutu* seems to be foreign to Eveland hence it might have been borrowed from the Krobos who also call it *kutu* or the Asantes where the inhabitants of Vume believed to have originated from. It should be noted that although it is known as “palm nut soup pot”, other soups can be prepared in it as well.

Pots for general cooking known as *nuɖaze* (Plate 9) acquire other names associated with leprosy *kpotomali*

(rimless pot) in Plate 10 is linked to a leper's shrunk fingers and the preparation of a meal called *akplē* (corn flour meal) respectively. Majority of the centres that make pots have similar shapes of the *nuḍaze* as well as a few other centres that engage in the making of *kpotomali*.



Plate 7: Detsize      Plate 8: Kutu      Plate 9: Nuḍaze      Plate 10: Kpotomali

The mouths of these pots especially *kpotomali* are moulded thick and wide to accommodate the vigorous movement of the paddle when it is used in stirring *akplē* and other similar meals. *Nuḍaze* is a multi-purpose pot which can also be used for boiling hot water, tubers and any other solid food prepared in the home. *Atadzize* (lap pot) (Plate 11) acquired its name from the way it is placed on the lap and worked on. It is used for boiling medicinal herbs. Similar to *atadzize* is *kpoklovi* (water boiling pot) in Plate 12 which is used for boiling hot water meant for bathing and cooking as well as for boiling medicinal herbs among the people of Agotime Adedome. *Amatsiḍaze* (medicine pot) in Plate 13 is a special pot made for the preparation of herbal medicines to cure chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, tuberculosis, etc. Usually, the mouth is made small with the intention to disallow people from peeping into it, which otherwise is believed will reduce the potency of the herb.



Plate 11: Atadzize      Plate 12: Kpoklovi      Plate 13: Amatsiḍaze

Other cooking pots include those used in making foods such as *yakayake* (grated cassava meal) and *abolo* (steamed corn meal) that demand the use of steam for the preparation. These are known as *yakayakeze* (Plate 14) and *aboloḍaze* (Plate 15) respectively. They are characterised by single or multiple perforations to permit vapour from boiling water to cook the meal. The pots are either perforated saucers attached or detached from pots. These pots are the most common in the middle belt around Dzodze Kuli, Dzoḡbefime, Fiagbedu and Vume in the southern belt where maize meals are their favourites. *Akpḡheze* (corn dough meal pot) indicated in Plate 16 is used for the preparation of corn dough meal popularly called *kenkey* by the Gas (inhabitants of Accra).



Plate 14: Yakayakeze with single and multiple perforations



Plate 15: Aboloḍaze      Plate 16: Akpḡheze

### c. PALM WINE POTS

Palm-wine is one of the favourite local drinks obtained from the oil palm tree in Eveland hence the making of a number of pots to support its activities. Apart from Kpando and Adedome, potters call the tapping pot *lubu* (Plate 17) and *mumli* (Plate 18) respectively. Other centres that make the same pot call it *gbaze* as indicated in Plate 19. *Gbaze* and *mumli* have similar shapes while *lubu* has no overlapping rim but a small hole with a circumference of about 1.5 centimetres wide. This is to avoid insects and dirt from entering the wine. All these pots classified as palm-wine tapping pot are used as a receptacle for collecting liquid juice otherwise known as palm-wine from the fell palm tree.



Plate 17: Lubu      Plate 18: Mumli      Plate 19: Gbaze

Other names which include *ahaze* (Plate 20), *ahatrḡze* (Plate 21) and *adzafize* (Plate 22) are specifically used for (storage, pouring and measuring) palm-wine respectively. The names of these three pots reflect on exactly what they are exclusively used for.



Plate 20: Ahaze      Plate 21: Ahatrḡze      Plate 22: Adzafize

d. BOWLS OF DIFFERENT KINDS

For the roasting of cereals and legumes, two types of bowls are made mostly at pottery centres around Dzodze, namely; Kpodoave, Fiagbedu, Kuli, Dzogbefime and Zomayi. They are named *soɲu* and *soɲuvi* in terms of big and small size respectively. *Soɲu* is also called *galitɔɠba* (Plate 24) because it is used for roasting *gari* while *soɲuvi* is called *eblitɔɠba* (Plate 25) because it used for roasting mostly corn. The latter is also used by priests for roasting leaves, roots, animals to form black powdery substances known as *eti* for medicinal purposes.



Plate 24: *Soɲu* or *galitɔɠba* Plate 25: *Soɲuvi* or *eblitɔɠba*

Grinding bowls are made in nearly all Ewe pottery centres. However, the most prolific centres engaged in these aspects of pottery are Todze, Ahlihadzi and Klokofe. The bowls acquire their names from their sizes, height, thickness or thinness of the rim, footed or footless base, potter's origin and the specific use. *Agbagā* (big or outsize bowl) is named so by Kpando Bame, Todze and Ahlihadzi potters because it represents the biggest of all bowls. *Agbagā* (Plate 26) is a multi-purpose vessel which is used as a feeding and drinking trough for domestic animals, for serving food and grinding vegetables if it is textured within.

*Ahakoloe* (palm wine bowl) in Plate 27 is an oversize bowl with a foot capable of containing at least a keg of palm wine. It is used for mixing and serving palm wine on various occasions. *Koloe zɔkɔkoe* (Plate 28) is named so by Kpando potters because of its elongated stand. It is mostly made with a lid to cover the food. Though it is meant for serving food during funerals for the guests of bereaved families, the name does not reflect on its use. The most important idea here is the differentiation of textured bowls from the smooth ones. *Koloe zɔkpuie* or *zɔɠba* (short-footed bowl) made by Kpando Bame and Vume Klokofe potters (Plate 29) have an all-round footing. *Koloe zɔkpuie* (grinding bowl) is similar to *Asante koloe* but textured within to aid the grinding of vegetables such as pepper, tomatoes, garden eggs, etc. They are made in two forms; one remain in its natural colour after firing and the other blackened with smoke. *Asante koloe* (eating bowl) as in (Plate 30) is used for serving all kinds of foods. It was one of the favourite pottery wares patronized by the Asantes of Ghana hence the name *Asante koloe*. The inside is made smooth to differentiate it from the grinding bowl which is textured.



Plate 26: *Agbagā* Plate 27: *Ahakoloe* Plate 28: *Koloe zɔkɔkoe*



Plate 29: *Koloe zɔkpuie* in natural colour and blackened



Plate 30: *Asante koloe* in brown and black

*Totetegba* (flat rim bowl) is characterized by flatness at the tip of the rim. It is used for grinding all kinds of vegetables. *Totetegba* (Plate 31) is named so by Todze potters because of the flat rim. *Toɖetegba* (thin rim bowl) (Plate 32) has a thin rounded rim at the tip. It is also used for grinding vegetables. *Kposi* (Plate 33) is a vegetable grinding bowl slightly taller, closed and ringed at the neck with two lines.



Plate 31: *Totetegba* Plate 32: *Toɖetegba* Plate 33: *Kposi*

Another bowl by Vume-Klokofe potters is the *zɔɠba* (Plate 34). *Zɔ* simply means 'foot' and in effect, it is an all-round footed bowl. It is used for grinding all kinds of vegetables and herbs. They are made in sizes and called differently; *zɔɠba lolotɔ* (big footed bowl) and *zɔɠba suetɔ* (small footed bowl). Alternatively, bowls are used for eating when the inside is rendered smooth. *Gomefufu* (Plate 35) is a footless bowl used for serving food.



Plate 34: *Zɔɠba*



Plate 35: *Gomefufu*

*Uegba* literally means native bowl pertaining to Eve. *Afɔtigba* (Plate 36) is used by Ahlihadzi and Todze potters to indicate short prop and knob supports for the bowl. *Apɔtyiwa* is an adopted name by Ahlihadzi potters who claim their ancestors come from Krobo. *Afɔtigba* is a four-footed bowl of Krobo origin. They are two forms; rough with serrated lines and smooth surfaces within. It is usually used in the “chop bars” or public eating places. *Uegba gomekpo* (Plate 37) is a bowl without foot, textured within and used for grinding all kinds of vegetables.



Plate 36: *Afɔtigba* (Footed bowl)



Plate 37: *Uegba gomekpo* (Footless bowl)

Eating bowls are also named according to the nature of the inner surface, patronage in the past, height and the specific use. *Emeniɛ* or *vegbamenini* (Plate 38) meaning smooth within is a term used for eating bowls. *Fufugba* acquired its name from the fact that *fufu* (pounded yam, plantain, cassava, etc.) a favourite dish among a section of the Eves is best enjoyed in it. *Fufugba nu deka*, literally meaning a *fufu* bowl with one opening or mouth is attributed to Plates 38 and 39. It is round in shape and covered with a lid and it is mostly used for serving *fufu* and other cereal meals. *Fufugba nu eve* (Plate 40) literally meaning a *fufu* bowl with two openings or mouths. It is a special serving bowl for all kinds of foods with two compartments. The shape is that of an ellipse which looks like a stretched circle. Both solid and soupy foods are served separately within the same bowl.



Plate 38: *Emeniɛ*

Plate 39: *Asante Koloe in brown*



Plate 40: *Fufugba nu eve*

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Eve potters give a number of reasons why they primarily make round shapes. Most of them used words like inheritance,

tradition and *mamanu* (legacy of a grandmother). *Mama* literally means, grandmother. This is to say that Eve pottery is an inherited skill from mothers/grandmothers. Customarily, it is accepted as a symbol of motherhood since the making of pots remains in the domain of women or mothers.

Names are assigned to pottery to identify them for specific activities and with individual communities that make them. For instance, *nuɔaze* is specifically for cooking, *detsize* for soup, *amatsiqaze* for boiling herbs, *yakayakeze* for preparing steamed cassava meal, *tomedeze* for fetching water, etc. The name *soɲu* and *soɲuvi* (gari and corn roasting bowls) are peculiar to people of Dzodze and its environs while the same set of bowls is known among the Ave people (Ave-Dzalele) as *galitɔgba* and *eblitɔgba* respectively. Among the inhabitants of Kpando (Bame) any form of bowl is called *koloe* while other centres such as Adidome Todze will call it *agba* or *vegba* at Zomayi.

Long-established general names of pottery can be identified among some centres (Ahlihadzi and Bame) to preserve the native identity placed on them. For instance, in Ahlihadzi, typical bowls for grinding and eating are called *vegba* (native bowl), Kpando potters have *anyigbaze* (ground pot) for all pots. Some names assigned to certain pots and bowls are alien to Eveland. While Todze and Vume potters call *detsize* (soup pot) as *kutu*, Ahlihadzi calls a footless grinding bowl *apɔtyiwa*. *Kutu* is of Krobo origin and *apɔtyiwa* is an Akan name for grinding bowl.

Also, some pots might have acquired their names as a result of the occurrence of some unfortunate past events or just to instill fear in children to be cautious when using particular pots. One of such pots is commonly called in Dzodze as *ekuze* (death pot). The size of the pot makes it impossible for a child to fetch water from the bottom part. A child who attempts to reach the bottom of the pot to fetch water is likely to topple over and die. Pots are also linked with a lepers shrunk fingers. *Kpotɔ* in Eve is a leper, so is a pot without a flat overlapping rim. The mouth is widely opened to facilitate easy stirring of the meal. It is used for the preparation of *akplɛ* and *kokonte* (corn and cassava flour meals). This is a cooking pot known as *kpotomali* commonly found among potters around the middle belt: Agotime Adedome, Ave-Dzalele, Dzodze Kuli, Dzogbefime and Zomayi.

The treatment of the base also tells to a large extent what names pottery assumes as well as what they are used for. Pots with an all-round footing are referred to as *ɔgomeze* or *afɔtize* in Adedome and Vume respectively. Bowls with all round footing are also known by Bame potters as *ɔkɔkoe* and *ɔkpuie* (elongated and short footed), Todze and Ahlihadzi as *afɔtizɔgba* (footed bowl) and Klokofe as *ɔgba* (footed bowl). Those without footing are called *gomekpo* or *gomefufu* in Ahlihadzi and Klokofe. Some pots also derive their names from the manner and surface on which they are made. A pot which is finished on the lap is called *atadzizevi*. *Atadzi* refers to “on the lap” and *zevi* refers to “small pot”. In its totality it literally means “small lap pot.”

The geographical location of pottery centres also inform the repertoire of vessels Eve potters make and use in their day-to-day activities. For example, potters living in and around forest belts (Kpando and Adedome) make a lot of pots for cooking and storing food substances. Conversely, those in the

savannah and coastal belts produce mostly bowls; *soju* and *agba* for roasting and grinding respectively. Vume, a coastal pottery centre near the Volta estuary (Sogakofe) is an exception from the latter categorization. The fact is that, they migrated from a forest zone in Denkyira, Ashanti Region, and make pots similar to Kpando Bame and Adedome who live in the forest belt. The inference is therefore true that most potters within the forest belt make mostly pots. It is also observed that, Ewes living along the forest belt eat a lot of meals (*fufu* and *amɔwɔ* - mixed corn and cassava dough) with soup while those within the savannah and the coastal zone mostly eat meals like (*akplɛ̃*, *yakayake* and *abolo*) with vegetables ground in earthenware bowls.

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