

## ANLO CLANS

Every Anlo male and female is said to belong to one of 15 clans known as 'hlowo' and each clan or 'hlo' is identified by a number of the paternal line called 'to-fome'

CLANS are kind of groupings in a community that has common unique features that distinguishes them from each other. Some of these features are below.

The 15 clans are Amɛ, Lafe, Amlade, Adzovia, Bate, Like, Bamee, Tovi, Klevi, Yetsofe, Agave, Tsiamɛ, Dzevi, Uifeme and Blu

Membership of a clan carries many distinguishing characteristics in the form of names, food taboos, clan totem which is associated with stories about its origins or their founding ancestors

### Amɛ Clan

Totem: Dog

Taboos: Not to breed, handle or destroy a dog

Members are not to be licked by dogs. Members must not be held by the ear and if held by mistake, the other ear must be held too. They must not set foot on the creeping branches of a sweet potato plant 'ti-ka'. They must not eat 'etsɔkple'

Violation will result in your demise

Clan cult: Mama Blolui

Members of this clan have the prerogative of settling any dispute between kinsfolk which resulted in sickness for one or both parties 'nugbidodo' or reconciliations.

### Lafe Clan

Totems: Monitor lizard 'eve', Antelope 'se' and Sparrow 'atsutsrɔɛ'

Taboos: Members of this clan are forbidden to destroy or eat totem animals. If any totem animal is found dead its body must be covered with leaves or if possible given a burial.

Violation of the taboo may result in your demise.

Clan cults: Avadouaklo, Kodzikli, Avadatsi, Tsiamitsi.

The Lafe clan is regarded as the oldest of all the Anlo clans. Their legendary ancestor, Atsu Uenya, was reputed to have led the Anlo on their migration to their present country.

### Amlade Clan

Totems: same as Lafe

Taboos: Same as lafe

Clan cult: Togbi Gbe, Sui, Nyaga, Adebe. The founder of this clan was Etse, twin brother of Atsu, founder of the Lafe clan. The two clans have identical observances except for the cults.

### Bamee Clan

Totems: Leopard, Monitor lizard

Taboos: Not to destroy, touch or handle the leopard, or sit on its skin. Not to eat 'lanɔɔɔɔ' or any spotted animal, or any animal resembling a leopard.

Not to destroy the monitor lizard, and to bury or cover its dead body with leaves.

Bamee babies must not be anointed with shea butter exposed to naked fire. Rashes will result from violation of taboos.

Clan cults: Gbaku, Gbekukuia

### Klevie Clan

Totem: Antelope 'se'

Taboos: Antelope may not be destroyed or handled.

Klevɔ, is a small local bird which not to be eaten.

Violation will result in your demise

Clan cults: Gbotonya, Kɔvi

## Tovie Clan

Totem: Buffalo

Taboos: Never to kill or eat the flesh of a buffalo

Violation will result in your demise

Clan cults: Mala, Kotsi

This is the only clan whose members are occasionally spoken of as actual descendants of the totem animal.

## Dzevie Clan

Totem: Leopard

Taboos: Totem animal not to be killed, eaten or handled. Not to use unprocessed salt for cooking. Not to use salt from a bulrush-basket 'kevimedze'

Violation of taboo will result in your demise

Clan cult: Nyigbla, the traditional religious god, and the Dzevi are its custodians

## Uifeme Clan

Totem: Antelope, Tortoise

Taboos: Totem animal not to be destroyed, eaten or handled

Violation of this taboo will result in rashes.

Clan cult: Mama Asife

This is the only clan whose members claim descent from a woman. Descent is however traced patrilineally from the male children of the ancestress Ui. Ui is also believed to be of foreign origin

## Xetsofe Clan

Totem: Sheep

Taboo: Totem animal may not be eaten or handled.

Violation may result in your demise

Clan cult: Avadatsi

Blu Clan

Totems: Antelope, Tortoise

Taboos: Totem animals may not be eaten or handled, not to use 'dɔka' any piece of fishing net as sponge, not to eat a piece of egg 'azikake', not to eat dough prepared in 'afianu' a wooden tray, penalty for violation is rashes.

Clan cult: nil

Since members of this clan trace their descent from ancestors in different places, their observations differ from place to place. Every adult is expected to perform 'etretsyɔtsyɔ'  
Evidence of this is the calabash being hung in the sitting rooms of Blu clan members.

Adzovia Clan

Totem: Adzovia, a small brown perch-like fish related to Tilapia Melanopleura (Akpa)

Taboos: Members of this clan are forbidden to eat their totem fish. They are also forbidden to use unprocessed sponge (kutsamado-gbedi). They must not use the following local trees as firewood: Aviatsi, Xe and Xetolia.

Violation of these taboos will result in rashes.

Clan cults: Mama Tɔmi, Asimatsɔnu, Uanyevi, Afɔmabgetɔme.

This is the senior of the two royal clans. The other is Bate.

Bate Clan

Totems: Leopard, Hippo, Dog, Crab, Raffia

Taboos: Members of this clan must not destroy, touch or handle any part of a leopard, or sit on its skin. They are not expected to look at any part of raffia in the morning. If they inadvertently do so, they must lick the raffia. And they do not use raffia as firewood.

They do not eat 'galadzenji' or a crab which is turned upside down with legs up when being cooked. They are not to be licked by dogs. If a member is licked by a dog, he must kick it to ward off supernatural retribution.

When the wife of a Bate man is pregnant she is forbidden to receive anything from anybody across a fence. Violation of these taboos may result in the birth of a 'uɔ' or python, an abnormal baby having the features of a python.

Violations of all other taboos of this clan result in rashes or loose tongue. Their taboos are among the most powerful. When they die members of this clan have their faces covered with leaves of raffia specially woven

Clan cults: Bate, Fiazikpui.

The Bate are the junior of the two royal clans. The other is Adzɔvia.

#### Like Clan

Totem: Saw-fish 'nyanyake'

Taboo: Totem animal not to be eaten.

Violation of the taboo will result in madness or your demise.

Clan cults: Zio, Atsipkui, Dzomadodetɔŋɔ

#### Tsiame Clan

Totems: Land-crab, Cashew tree

Taboos: Totem objects not to be eaten.

Cashew tree may not be used for firewood, and its nuts not to be eaten.

Violation of taboo will result in your demise

Clan cults: Tsali, Dɔkutonyi

## Agave Clan

Totems: Same as Tsiamé

Taboos: Same as Tsiamé

Clan cults: Kaklaku, Gbe, Tsixi, Dzemu

<https://www.modernghana.com/news/1007096/a-brief-history-of-the-dzevi-clan-of-alakple-and.html>