WHO ARE THE TIKAR?

M. D. W. JEFFREY

The Tikar

The Tikar, as a distinct tribal name, will be found to follow the lines of another apparent tribal name, namely that of the So-Cabu (1802, 185, 954) who wrote: "It sometimes happens, especially when there is little work with primary sources, that mistakes in fact or in interpretation become imbedded into the corpus of knowledge on a particular subject and are quoted time and again without question. Such seems to be the case with an alleged group of people, variously called the So, or Se, or Soe, who are supposed to have lived at one time in the Chad basin and who become more definite and real every time they are mentioned in the literature. I would like to suggest here that a reassessment of the literature ... leads to a somewhat different conclusion."

Palmer (1926, 61) in his introduction to Furtado's History of the first ten years of Malai Etnia Abemna of Bornu (1871-1881) wrote: "Not far south of Kpanar lies the site of the famous town of Amba. From these in the country as a whole back to Puntland (capital of Barhaw) ... the indigenous peoples migrated to the modern Kordof and Bahrains where they are still called the So."

From this it becomes clear that the So, or Se, or Soe, were originally a confederacy of tribes ranging from Lake Chad around the southern rim of Kabul to the banks of the river Bahrains in Bornu. Any search for the So culture, or the So people, must be in that region, for there are not one but many So. It is my intention to show that this is a tribal name of uncertain links leading to the so-called Tikar as a tribal name.

* M. D. W. Jeffrey arrived at the end of 1907 after 12 years of work in the field of Social Anthropology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. He was appointed for 12 years as Indian Director of the Indian Central Gold Service, serving in Southern Nigeria and Southern Cameroons. He was employed by the Indian Government of Bombay in 1910 as a special agent in the Northern Cameroons.
The Tikar language.

From what has been said so far, it is clear that Tikar language was in use in the region. The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is a Bantu language, and it is spoken by about 500,000 people in the region. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region.

The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken by about 500,000 people in the region. The Tikar language is a Bantu language, and it is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region.

The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken by about 500,000 people in the region. The Tikar language is a Bantu language, and it is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region.

The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken by about 500,000 people in the region. The Tikar language is a Bantu language, and it is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region. The Tikar language is spoken in the Tikar region, which is located in the northwest of the Cameroon. The Tikar language is closely related to the Bantu languages spoken in the region.
call Naughi. It means tongue or language. The term Lhaba means the white man's talk, i.e., Hausa, Hausa talk. Wil in Lhaba means people, so Lhabaum means the language of the Mumb people. At Kami the talk was not Lhabaum but Tikari which language is not spoken or even known here.

Westermann and Bryan (1853, 11, 122, 123) also draw attention to this difficulty: "The linguistic situation is further complicated by the use, among Europeans and others, of several collective names (e.g., Widokum, Tikari, Tigum) each of which covers a number of small groups of people, whose languages or dialects may, or may not be, related."

The languages and dialects provisionally grouped under the heading, Isolated Language Groups: Mumb-Kum, are those called Pahirimba-Rumra by Talbot; Nxam by Bremens; We by Meyer. Note that most of the people speaking them are also known as such, and are indicated below by Tikari.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Mu</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Zhe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belly</td>
<td>Eshung</td>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>Ehn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finger</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Foot</td>
<td>Ehn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Mum</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Nde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Neh</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Thye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Mu</td>
<td>Chief</td>
<td>Mule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion</td>
<td>Moom or</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singer</td>
<td>Diam</td>
<td>Fingers</td>
<td>Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum</td>
<td>Ta</td>
<td>Fingers</td>
<td>Eme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twenty</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Mungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>Sop</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Wu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Ngu</td>
<td>River</td>
<td>Gah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>Ngu</td>
<td>Night</td>
<td>Gah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>SiBo</td>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>Ngo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>Gatu</td>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Nge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>Moom</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Nga</td>
<td>Spear</td>
<td>Ame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double</td>
<td>Gumbi</td>
<td>Oliphant</td>
<td>Nung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who are the Tikari?

Days of their five week:

1. Bo
2. Bi
3. La
4. Nyo
5. She

She was the market day and day of rest at Bambam.

So far the linguistic evidence has not been of much aid in deciding who are the Tikari. There is an attempt by Westermann and Bryan to claim that Tum is Tikari, but this claim has not been indubitably established. A considerable amount of information lies unpublishep Government reports, so a glance at them is necessary.

Unpublished British Civil Service Records

On arriving in June 1858 to take charge of the old Bambam division now divided into those of Bambam, Wum and Nkambe, I was confronted with serious language difficulties. There were seven Government employed interpreters for twenty or more different languages, yet all called either Tikari if there was an homophone in their language or Tikari if there were not.

Thus among the Bambam is found the Tikari group. Their present occupation according to Jeffreys (1852, 48, p. 147) is accounted for as follows. The original half was of Chokwe stock living in-between Yssel and Nqunquneto the Portuguese Colony. These Chokwe were moved inland after overcomemg, removing the Bambam attacked the Tikari and forced them out. Again prominent tribes of the Tikari were incorporated into the tribe and these men are the ancestors of the present Tikari group among the Bambam. From the Tikari the Bambam moved into the Loko or Bantam territory which is situated between Bambam (Bumum) and Tikari. This information places the emphasis on the Tikari's being a people and not a region. Further research among the Tikari is the Bambam Divisional officer revealed contributions to the Tikari by the District Officer, Evans, and C. V. Evans and Fiddes Haywood, Mr. H. W. Frothingham in the Quarterly Report for September 1952 wrote: "The object of this note is to give a brief sketch of recent investigations among the various Tikari groups under the heading Noguma tribes and of those situated among the Babumbo."
to me. "We have heard that the Bardo, the Bamun and others have come from Ndwo and we know nothing about them nor why it is that all our languages are different there from the same place." Certainly, the tribes known as Tikar in the Cameroon show an independence of one another, while being so close that they cannot have come from the same original region. The "Junc Quarterly Report" of 1955 dealt with the area in present control by the Ndpf, native council illustrates this position. The native, Ndph derives from the word Ndpf, which describes an area connected with Kim, which is located between the Kukuri and the Bamun among other tribes. The report runs: "It is thought that the name "Bambang Area" is incorrect and misleading. Assessment has shown that Bambang Area is not one of the undivided areas but that Bambang has never been in a position to exercise any overlordship over the other ten clans that go to form the whole. Moreover, Bambang does not claim such an overlordship or even claim primacy among the ten other clans, but has put forward tentatively to all the chiefs and was agreed to with enthusiasm. No evidence was found to prove that these clans were ever united under one chief during their seclusion in this area. On the contrary, the evidence points to each clan maintaining a strict independence under its own chieftain (an almost semi-divine personage) for the last three centuries or more, in fact since the first migration from the Tikar kingdom of Ndph. It is evident that the Tikar, who were, are, and still are, the most civilized of the central and autonomous villages of the Ndph native council. The following are some of Ndph origin: Bammum, Bambang, Bana and Bambang."

I may add that in 1943 while working in the area, I heard during the course of conversation that several headmen of the Bambang area were trying to find out what the Bambang people were doing at the time of the "Bambang revolution". They were told that the Bambang people had been at war with the Bambang people at the time of the "Bambang revolution". They were told that the Bambang people had been at war with the Bambang people at the time of the "Bambang revolution".
The chiefs and their elders are the authorities for the historical and ethnological details. The history of the Tikars has been generally gleaned from various sources including the chiefs of Takum, Gaphaga and Bamum, while Sango, the Fulani chief has contributed practically every Tikar unit in English territory has been consulted and the report has been written with special reference to the previous reports on Bamun, Dung and Nsogli, all of whom are of the same title. "J. Ripert... who is an authority on this tribe very kindly read the historical portion and found himself in general agreement."

Through the kindness of Mrs. Chilver I am able to quote from extracts made by Dr. Armstrong from the official records in the Nkam Province Office which throw light on the Tikar group: "There are a number of Tikar located at Takum. They have the Berberi mark down the centre of the forehead, and in winter times migrate by way of Mbum to Fon, Bambey and Binghin in the French Cameroons. Eventually, about the middle of the last century, they took part in the Chinese immigration into the region of Donga and Takum. They co-operated apparently with the Adamawa Mamans and under a largely infusion of Fulani blood. As a result of close contact with the Fulani they took on a more patrilineal character and a more substantial and infused Fulani blood.

4) He was the leader of the Bambuy or Cow Fulani migration that entered, with their herds of cattle, the Bamum grazing lands for the first time in 1717. M. D. W. Jeffreys.

In 1845, this migration took place and the Tikars, who had a large number of rams, went north to the Adamawa. Thus the Tikars, who had previously been settled in the region of Donga and Takum, were driven out of their homes and took refuge with the Fulani in the region of the Adamawa. This migration resulted in a substantial infusion of Fulani blood into the Tikar population, leading to a more patrilineal and substantial character.

5) The Tikars, who had previously been settled in the region of Donga and Takum, were driven out of their homes and took refuge with the Fulani in the region of the Adamawa. This migration resulted in a substantial infusion of Fulani blood into the Tikar population, leading to a more patrilineal and substantial character.

6) The Tikars, who had previously been settled in the region of Donga and Takum, were driven out of their homes and took refuge with the Fulani in the region of the Adamawa. This migration resulted in a substantial infusion of Fulani blood into the Tikar population, leading to a more patrilineal and substantial character.
African Studies, 23, 3-4, 1964

Dr. Nek (1931, I, 27) stated that the
Betsa claim that they and the Tikar came
from the east of Lake Chad centuries ago.
Mbaa state that some Tikar were
present with the Betsa, Bachama and Mbaa
who first sailed the Benue river in their
metal canoes which brought them from
Jumfiama in the lower Faro valley.

Byr as writing in Bulletin de la Société Études Camerounaises (1943, no. 3, p. 35)
states that the Tikar first occupied the
western part of the Ngundere plains near
Lake Alsim and then moved in a N.N.E-
S.W. direction. Other early settlements
were Mohorba and Gorov.

The Temples (1923, 80) stated that the
Tikar "branch of the Chamba is known as
the Tikar or Tikarum. They number some
240 and are now merged in the Zumperti
strictly, the division.

Here is a statement that the Chamba in
Tikar are called Tikar, while it will be
realized that the Hall of Bamenda who
describes them as Chamba have incorporated
some Tikar and Chamba group in their organization. The
Tikar divide their lands into three
balla brothers of the Koneko
Cameroonians.

Professor Mossop (1958, 259) wrote of the
Tikar as follows: Tikar, Bhum, Dzomome,
new number about 10,000 and have long
been dominated by intrusive Mbaa. The
Mbaa, Fom, Krom, Ndo, Nswe and
Nungur have some times classed as Tikar in
a literal sense." Between these last four
writers any hope of discovering a specific
meaning for the word Tikar disappears.

An attempt to clarify the position of
the Tikar was made in 1954. McCulloch
(1954, 11) dealing with the Tikar groups
in the Mandated Territories of the British
and French Cameroun lists as Tikar the
following chiefdoms: Fungom, Bum, Krom,
Krom, Bohem, Mbaa, Wiyas, Tung, Bongo, Ndo and
Mbaa. Mbaa, however, merely means "the
land or place" while Ndo is the area of the
jurisdiction of a native court and includes
the above three tribes within the old Bamenda division.

A number of unrelated villages some of whom
disclaim Tikar origin.

Further on we learn that "the Tikar are
engaged in a number of job-priesthood
kingdoms, differing in size, language, political
structure and kinship organization. Of the
predominantly Tikar authorities listed above it
is only Naow, Kon, and Bum, where
consolidated chiefdoms were formed prior to
the arrival of the Europeans..." 41

The survey concludes: "Ndo authority is
made up of 12 small chiefdoms which are
not linguistically nor culturally homogeneous
and include one non-Tikar chiefdom. Ndo
Authority contains a number of small
Tikar chiefdoms differing in dialect,
culture, origin, and origin, and some groups of
Mbaa and Zumper peoples; them
contains Wankum settlements; Mbaa small
bands of Mbaa origin. The 'Nungur' group of Tikar is contained in three
Native Authorities—Wiyas, Tung, and Mbaa—but the
villages which belong to any one of
these groups occupy a continuous stretch of
territory and are intermingled among
villages belonging to the other two units. 42

"In the Tikar, French, and Cameroon are
divided into seven independent chiefdoms
Kamain, north of the Mbaa river, and Banga
southeast of the tribes around Adamawa.
He (p. 315) lists the Tikar and adds a
bracketed comment: "by this name at least
they are called by the Fulbe, though
they probably have another name for
themselves as by this they do not seem to be
known near the coast."

Perusal, in an unaided report, states that
Tikar is probably a Bhum term adopted
by the Fulani, and may be a nickname
the suggestion made by my informants was
that it comes from the Tikar expression
wiyas, 'that is so'. At any rate it is not the
Tikar own name for themselves, which
is given as Dzomome, the language being
Mbamum."

The Wiyas, who claim to be Tikar, give a
similar explanation. They say that Tikar is
a Fulani nickname for them based on the
Wiyas expression wiyas, ‘that is so’. The
Wiyas also say that Bum is the
name of the people who are part of the Tikar
tribe.

Mbaa, already cited, points out that
Hutter states that Tikar is a "collective
term used by the Fulbe", but he himself
denies that it is a Fulbe term or that of a
particular clan, and says that the name
denotes a numerous tribe. He
I was particularly interested in a statement
made to me in 1960 by Fulani of the
Mbaa plains. The local Fulani stated that
Tikar was a Fulani nickname for those who,
on being captured as slaves, refused to eat or
be comforted and so just died. According
to my informants the Fulani have a proverb
"Tikar means taking in Fulani..." It would
appear that Tikar carries a connotation
implying stubborn, mulla, unadulterated,
unimagined or unsuppressable. Tikar would
then mean the unadulterated, and the proverb
would mean "the unadulterated die."

In this connection I am reminded of an
observation by Kirk-Greene (1956, 172) on
the Longuda pagans of Adamawa. Of these
he writes: "for the first two decades of the
British occupation they maintained their
reputation for intransigence that late as
1924 an official publication was
dedicated to the trials of a wild tribe people, who
have the power of summoning death in their
release by apparently being able to die
and afterwards never been enucleated."

Xames significant of this intransigence, of
this attitude that prefers 'death
slavery' are not uncommon in west Africa.
Gunn and Connor (1960, 52, 99) give two
instances: "the most prominent
sections of Kamak 'proper' are the Tegina Kam
and 'the Mambakara. The
name Mambakara is thought by Temple to
be a Hausa nickname, meaning 'unadulterated'
or 'pure', and in fact the Mambakara maintained
their independence when others were
rebuffed by the Sarkin Sulem. Matala people in
the district of the Gwai Federation, N. Nigeria is said
variously to mean 'fighter' (referring to


struckness to the slave-raisers of Portugal and Wemahib (specifically in the form Matwia) to be derogatory terms used by the Westerners.

Strange as it may seem Aristotle was aware of this type of people for he wrote in Book I of his Politics: "And so, in one point of view, the art of war is a natural art of acquisition, an art which we ought to practice... against men who, though intended by nature to be governed, will not submit: for war of such a kind is naturally just." One therefore concludes that the slave raids of the Fulani were "naturally just" and it is just too that these, the raided who do not submit are in fact Tikars.

F. W. Taylor (1955) has: "Tikar, be angry, Tikar, stone, refuse to eat... Tikar, irritate; Tikar, be angry in a common manner..."

If we see therefore that Tikar is a Fulani nickname arising from the intransigence of this type of people.

The latest information that I have on the Tikar is from the musicologist, Kubek (An Unpublished B.A. thesis in the Department of Social Science, University of Ibadan, 1956).

To sum up the evidence. In 1857 Barth records Tikar as the name used by the Fulbe to describe tribes in Adamawa, but considers that they probably have another name for themselves and points out that the same Tikar is unknown at the coast (where incidentally, the Fulani do not penetrate).

Hutter (1899) postulated a collective term used by the Fulani. In 1907, however, Meissel, evidently on information from the Bamum where the ruling group called themselves the Rammum and Tikas, told that the Fulbe denotes "a numerous classification" suggesting by this definition that many groups are connected with the name. The Fulbe use it for the Chamba in 1922. It is certainly being used by "Chewsworth in Bamenda in 1925 where it has been in use up to Dr. Kalberg's monograph. My experience in Bamenda, however, is that if one asks a people their name in Bamenda they will reply with their own name for themselves: only on being asked first whether they are Tikars will they reply: "Oh yes, we are Tikars." Finally the word is used by Kirk-Greene in 1958 to describe the Kambila papuan.

At present the best explanation for the Tikar is that it is a Fulani nickname bestowed on a mixed group of people; that it is not a tribal name, but a partname or collective term for a large number of tribes living in an ill-defined area who belong to different cultural and linguistic groups. It seems that the suggestions of Barth and Hutter are correct—the suggestion would explain the use of this term to describe those linguistic and culturally anomous tribes of whom many are morphables while others have "divine" rulers.

It is doubtful, therefore, whether one is justified in continuing to use the name Tikar because its connotation is uncertain: the answer to the question "Who are the Tikars?" is that as a distinct tribe there are no such people.

REFERENCES


