

The Tribes that know the Tigre language and their way of living.

These are the tribes whose fathers spoke Tigre.

1. Mänsa' Bet-'Abrehe and Mänsa' Bet-Sahaqan.

These two were brothers, but they parted from each other. And now they have become two tribes; and they are called the two Mänsa', or the two Haygat. Their language is Tigre only. Their living is from live stock [viz. cows and goats], and from tilling the soil. But nowadays they have not much cattle, and they live by ploughing. Their religion was formerly Christianity, and each had a church, and priests. But, later on their (last), priests did not know how to read.. Then the Mohammedans came to their country and converted them to Islam. And the majority of them became Mohammedans: a few, however, are Christians up to this day. Each of them has a village as its living place; and this village is not moved [like the camps of the nomads]. But sometimes they change the place of their villages. The village of the, Bet-'Abrehe was formerly at Haygat (Fig. 21). And later on it [was] moved from Haygat to Gäläb (Fig. 22). And the village went down from Gäläb twice: the first time it was located at Tasasa. The second time, however, it went down to Laba; and .. a is still ..(called Deman-degge (i. e. ruins of the village). On the other hand, it went (up) to 'Ag'aro, once. And later on it moved from there to Dangura. After this it returned to Gäläb, and there it is up to this day. The houses of the village [which], they build [are] qesasa (huts, Fig. 23) and seqlö (round houses, FigS. 24, 25); and within they make a small interior house of mats. When they move about they put their loads on oxen and mules and donkeys.

The village of the Bet-Sahaqan however, was in former days at Hamhem. Then it moved to the bushes of Mehélab, and there it is up to this day. Their houses and their pack animals are like those of the Bet-'Abrehe. But, now the village of Mehélab is shifting gradually to another place because the water is now far from them.

2. The Red Marya and the Black Marya.

The Red Marya and the Black Marya are brothers. And the ancestors of the two Marya and of the two Mänsa were brothers: they were called Maryu and Mansu. Later on they parted from each other and each one of them grew into two divisions: Thus the Red Marya and the Black Marya were separated from each other and each one of them lived in its [own] village and in its [own] country. And now they are called the two Marya, or the Red and the Black Marya. Their language is Tigre only. Their living is from cattle; but they plough a little also. Their religion was formerly in their ancestors time, Christianity. But afterwards they were converted to Islam, and they are all Mohammedans now. They have their dwelling places each on his field. And they live together by twos and threes; that is to say, those whose lands are near each other live together. In this way their villages are scattered, and each one of them lives near his land. And they build huts (qesasa). Their beasts of burden are oxen, donkeys and a few mules.

3. The Three Maflas Habab, 'Ad Temaryam and 'Ad Takles.

The ancestor of these three was Asgade. 'Asgade came down from the highland of Kabasa. Some say, 'Asgade started from the Tigray (1) country, and on his way to this p (our) country he halted in the country of Bet-Tosem (DacchiToscim) at 'Ad Nefäs. Later on he left 'Ad Nefäs and went down to this region where his descendants live now. But the brother of 'Asgede stayed at 'Ad Nefas. And for this reason the ancestor of the Three Maflas and the ancestor of 'Ad Nefas are brothers. And the descendants of the people of Asgade and of his brother who stayed in the Tigray country are there up to this day: they are called the sons of Asgade. But some say: the country of Asgade- is 'Ad Nefas, and from there Asgade came down, and his brothers stayed there.

And later on 'Asgade begat Maflas. And Maflas begat Hebtas and Takles and 'Abib, The descendants of Hebtas are the Habab: a part of the Habab live on this side of the frontier [between the English territory and the Italian colony], and another part beyond. The descendants of Takles are the 'Ad Takles. 'Abib was the father of the 'Ad Temaryam. And 'Ad Hebtas - or Habab 'Ad Takles and 'Ad Temaryam are

together called the Three Mafläs, and also the Three Habab. The language of all of them is Tigre; the religion of all of them was originally Christianity.

For even the 'Ad Hebtēs used to have a church and a tabot and priests. Then Kantebay Gaweg was converted to Islam, and he said to the priest: "Break the tabot." And the priest said: "I dare not break the tabot of Mary." And Kantubay Gäweg took the tabot himself and chopped it with an ax. Then even the priests became Mohammedans, and all their descendants are up to this day sheḵs of the tribe.

And all the people of the Three Maflas embraced Islam, and they are all now Mohammedans.

Their living is from live stock, camels, goats and sheep. Their houses are of mats; but in their villages they also put branches with leaves on their huts. Their villages move to the lowlands and to the highlands; and their animals pasture at a place that is as far as day's journey distant from them. And men bring the milk from the herds and flocks to the village; or else, each one keeps some of his animals that give milk near the village. When they move, they put their loads on camels and oxen and donkeys, and sometimes mules. But before their villages move they send first their furniture ahead to the place where they are to go, and their villages are located [always] at the same place in the highlands, and again in the lowlands. The village of the 'Ad Hebtēs is located at Naqfa, when it is in the highlands, and at 'Algena or 'Wad-Gän, when it is in the lowlands. The village of the 'Ad Takles [, however,] has no certain places; but generally it is located at 'Ede-'Atba, when it is in the highlands, and at Habarö, when it is in the lowlands. And the village of the 'Ad Temaryam is located at 'Af-'Abad, when it is in the highlands, and at 'Äkäät, when it is in the lowlands. The people of the Three Maflas do not know how to plough. But a few of the bondsmen of the 'Ad Temaryam do plough a little. And the Three Maflas buy the corn from the Two Mänsa', from the Bēt-Guḵ and from the Belen. Or else, they buy corn and rice from Massaua. i) I.e. the province generally known by its Amharic name Tigre.

4. The Bet-Guḵ or Bet-Gäribruk,

Their ancestor came down from Kabasa. And some say that the ancestor of the Bet-Guḵ was a relative of 'Asgäde; and for this reason the Bet-Guḵ and the Three Maflas are aḵin to each other. Some again say that the ancestor of the Bet-Guḵ, Kantebay Gäribruk- Zär'i-Beruk-, came down from Waḵḵi, (1) and that the descendants of his brothers are there up to this day. The language of the Bet-Guḵ is Tigre. Their religion was formerly Christianity, but now they have embraced Islam. Their living is from ploughing and from live stock (cows and some goats); but now they have not much cattle: they live by ploughing. Their village is Wäzēnt'a't: their houses are **qesasa**. The ancestor of these three was **Asgade**. 'Asgade came down from the highland of Kabasa. Some say, 'Asgade started from the Tigray (1) country, and on his way to this p (our) country he halted in the country of Bet-Tosem (Dacchi-Toscim) at 'Ad Nefäs. Later on he left 'Ad Nefäs and went down to this region where his descendants live now. But the brother of 'Asgade stayed at 'Ad Nefäs. And for this reason the ancestor of the Three Maflas and the ancestor of 'Ad Nefäs are brothers. And the descendants of the people of 'Asgade and of his brother who stayed in the Tigray country are there up to this day: they are called the sons of 'Asgade. But some say: the country of 'Asgade- is 'Ad Nefäs, and from there 'Asgade came down, and his brothers stayed there.

And later on 'Asgade begat Maflas. And Maflas begat Hebtēs and Takles and 'Abib, The descendants of Hebtēs are the Habab: a part of the Habab live on this side of the frontier [between the English territory and the Italian colony], and another part beyond. The descendants of Takles are the 'Ad Takles. 'Abib was the father of the 'Ad Temaryam. And 'Ad Hebtēs - or Habab 'Ad Takles and 'Ad Temaryam are together called the Three Mafläs, and also the Three Habab. The language of all of them is Tigre; the religion of all of them was originally Christianity.

For even the 'Ad Hebtēs used to have a church and a tabot and priests. Then Kantebay Gaweg was converted to Islam, and he said to the priest: "Break the tabot." And the priest said: "I dare not break the tabot of Mary." And Kantubay Gäweg took the tabot himself and chopped it with an ax. Then even the

priests became Mohammedans, and all their descendants are up to this day sheḳs of the tribe.

5. The Three Möté'at: 'Asus, Gemhöt and 'Aylät.

The language of these three is Tigre only. The people of the Mawatte' are of different origins: some of them are of Balau origin; and some of them are 'Asraf. (1) And besides these that are named there are found a few others. The religion of all of them is Islam. Their living is from camels, cattle, goats and sheep; a few of them, however, plough. Their houses are ma'ddani [i. e. square houses of wood and branches, Fig. 25] and qesasa. These three do not move about. Their beasts of burden are camels, oxen, donkeys and a few mules. The place where they buy and purchase everything is Massaua.

1) I.e. Arabs that came from the Barka country.

6. Nabara and Gadam-Sega.

The language of these people also is Tigre. But the Tigre of the Nabara is not pure: it is between Tigre and Tigrina. They used to be counted formerly with the Moté'at; but now they are by themselves. Their living is from cattle and goats, and from ploughing. Their houses are of mats and of branches. Their beasts of burden are oxen and mules and donkeys. They live in the Moté'at country; their religion is Islam.

7- Mäshalit.

Their language is Tigre. They say that they are originally related to the Assaorta. The living of the Mäshallit - from sahel [i. e. the coast] - is from cattle, goats, sheep and a few camels; they work also at Massaua. They have no village: they are nomads and roam about, following their herds. Most of the time they live in the plain. The religion of all of them is Islam. Their houses are of mats. When they move they put their loads on oxen, donkeys, mules and camels. The only corn they eat is bought: they do not plough. Their only country is Waqiro [in the plain, 1/2 day's journey westward of Hetemlo].

8. The people of Medun.

Those who live at 'Emkullu, Hetemlo, at Massaua, at Daḳano - or Hergigo [i. e. Archico]- all speak the Tigre language. But most of them have also learned Arabic. They are all Mohammedans. They are of different origins, but their leaders are mostly of Balau origin. Their living is from trading. Their houses are ma'ddani, qesasa and merabba' [i. e. stone-houses].

9. 'Ad S(h)uma and 'Ad 'Aha and 'Ad 'Askar.

Their language is Tigre only. They are all Mohammedans. They are of different origins, and they used to be counted with the Möté'at people. The 'Ad Suma, however, are related among themselves. The ancestor of the 'Ad Suma had married a woman called S(h)uma; then he begat a few sons of her and died. And Suma reared her children, and she was very brave and well known. And afterwards, when her children had their own houses they were called 'Ad Suma. And they are called up to this day 'Ad Suma after the name of their ancestress. The only corn they eat is bought. Their houses are of mats. And they roam about following their herds everywhere. Their beasts of burden are oxen and mules and donkeys.

10. Wayra and 'Aflanda.

The language of these [peoples] is Tigre. They are all Mohammedans. The ancestor of the 'Aflanda came as a Mohammedan from the sea on the road of the Gashi river. (1) And some of his descendants live in the Barka country; some in the Habab country, some in the country of the Two Mänsa'; some, again, live at Suaḳin - or Kar [near Suaḳin] -. The Wayra live in the Moté'at country, everywhere. The living of these

people is from cattle, camels, sheep and goats. And they roam about everywhere following their herds. Their houses are of mats. And their beasts of burden are camels, oxen, donkeys and mules. And they eat the corn which they buy from everywhere.
Perhaps Suakin-Chartoum-Kassala.

11. Säura and cAd Ma'allem and 'Asfada.

The language of all of them is Tigre. They are all Mohammedans. The Saura and the 'Ad Ma'allem used to be counted with the 'Ad Temaryam; but now they are counted by themselves, and each of them has its own village. The 'Asfa'da used to be counted with the Habab, but now they are separated from them (and live) by themselves. All these [three tribes] call their village zaga. And the zagas of the Saura and the 'Ad Ma'allem go up and down in the country of the 'Ad Temaryam. And even the 'Asfada live there with their zaga and go up and down. The houses of the zagas are of mats. Their beasts of burden are camels, oxen, donkeys and a few mules. Their living is from camels and cattle. And they buy corn from other countries.

12. The 'Ad S(h)ek.

Their language is Tigre. And they are all Mohammedans. Their living is from camels, cattle, sheep and goats. Their country is between the Habab and the 'Ad Temaryam. And their village is called Zaga 'Ad Sek. They go down to the lowlands and up to the highlands; their beasts of burden are camels and oxen and donkeys. And the houses of the zaga are of mats. And the only corn which they get is that which they buy.

. They are sometimes called also by the name of their chief, e. g. 'Ad Sek'Alamin formerly, and now 'Ad Sek-'Amar.

13. The Bet-Ma'ala, Ganifra and Bet-Ba'ass(h)o.

The language of all of them is Tigre. They are all Mohammedans. Their ancestors came from the sea at Suakin. And each one of them used to live as a tribe by itself. But later on the Ganifra and the Bet-Ba'asso decreased in number, and they united with the Bet-Ma'ala. And now they are counted with the Bet-Ma'ala. Their living is from camels, cattle, goats and sheep. Their houses are of mats. And they go up and down following their herds. Their beasts of burden are camels, oxen and donkeys.

14. 'Algäden and Sabdärat.

Their language is Tigre. And their ancestors came as Mohammedans from the sea; and the descendants of them are Mohammedans up to this day. Their living is from ploughing and from cattle. But I do not know much about their villages and their beasts of burden. It is said, however, that they have horses.

15. The 'Ad Häséri

Their language is Tigre; but they know also the language of the Hedärab, or Min-Amer. They are all Mohammedans. Their living is from camels, cattle, goats and sheep. Their houses are of mats. And, their village is called zaga; and they go down to the lowlands and up to the highlands. Their beasts of burden are camels, oxen and donkeys. Of the 'Ad Häséri some live on this side of the frontier and some beyond.
II. These are the tribes that know the Tigre language, but whose fathers had another language. These tribes have a different language of their own country, but they have learned the Tigre language, and some of them speak it well.

1. Belen. (1)

All the people of the Belen country have a language of their own; but, on the other hand, all of them know the Tigre language also. The Belen were originally all Christians, but now half of them have become Mohammedans. Their living is from ploughing and from cattle and goats. Their villages stay each at its place: they do not move. Their houses are [of the] qes'asa kind. Their beasts of burden are oxen and donkeys and mules

i) I. e. Bilin or Bogos.

2. The Min-'Amer.

Their language is Hedarab; but most of them know also the Tigre language. They are all Mohammedans. Their living is from camels and cattle and goats. Their villages are called zaga. And sometimes they move. The houses of the villages are of mats. Their beasts of burden are camels and a few donkeys and oxen. They ride also on camels and even on horses.

3. Kabasa.

Their language is Tigrina. But the Tigrina and the Tigre resemble each other, and their people understand each other to a certain degree. On the other hand, many of the Kabasa people know the Tigre language, and there are also Tigre people that know the Tigrina language. But of the people of Gernmägan - or Dembäzan - [those who live] in the village of Wara, at Bet-Mahare - or Däqqi Mahare -, and at Gurität, know the Tigre language well.

4. Säuhö or 'Asawerta (Saho or Assaorta).

Their language is different; but many of them know the Tigre language. Their religion is Islam. Their living is from cattle, camels, goats and sheep. And some of them trade along the coast of the bay of Gemez. (1) Their houses are of the vna'adani and qesasa kind. Their villages do not move about. Their beasts of burden are camels, donkeys and mules.

i.e. the bay of Adulis.

Source: Publications of the Princeton Expedition to Abyssinia.

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