



AFRICA'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Himba

Since the 16th Century, the Himba have lived in the scattered settlements of Namibia's Kunene Region, remaining true to their traditions and customs for centuries. There are approximately 30,000 to 50,000 members of this semi-nomadic group today.

Both men and women wear loincloths of soft leather. Himba women are famous for their unique hairstyles and they use “otjize” – a paste of red ochre, butter, and fat, which they smear on their hair and skin, making their bodies glow with beauty. From puberty, women braid their hair and start applying this paste all over their bodies, giving them a striking red hue. While “otjize” protects their skin from the sun, this tradition is essentially done for aesthetic reasons.

The Himba are a religious people who believe in a god called Mukuru. They communicate with their god through the “okuruwo,” or the holy fire, which is constantly kept alight in their villages. They believe the holy fire links them with their ancestors, who act as intermediaries between the people and their god.

The Himba



The Hazda

On the shores of Tanzania's Lake Eyasi in the Great Rift Valley, live the Hadza Community, whose way of life has remained the same for more than 10,000 years. With an estimated population of 1,000 people, they are one of the last groups of hunter-gatherers in the world.

One of the fascinating aspects of the Hadza's society is their language. They speak a distinctive click language, which has led to the belief that they are related to the Khoisan of the Kalahari Desert. But, despite this claim, genetic studies have shown no relation between the two groups.

Leading a stone age life, the Tanzanian Tribe primarily relies on wild fruits, tubers, and roots for food. They are also avid hunters who use bows and arrows to hunt animals such as buffalos and antelope as well as birds. Honey is also an important part of the Hadza's diet.

The Hazda



The Dogon

The Dogon people of Mali have a rich history and are believed to be descendants of ancient Egyptians. They are renowned for their astronomical knowledge and wisdom dating back to 3200 B.C. Astonishingly, the Dogon knew about Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, and its three-star system (Sirius A, Sirius B, and Sirius C) long before scientists began contemplating the star's existence. They knew that Sirius B was invisible to the naked eye and that it has a 50-year orbital period.

It remains a mystery how this intelligent tribe possesses such astounding astronomical wisdom. This is a quality they shared with the Ancient Egyptians, who also had knowledge about Sirius, and considered this star system an important part of their origins as they believed that's where some of their gods came from.

The Dogon are also famous for their mask dances, wooden sculptures, and architecture. Their art is centered around religious values and ideals. Like many African societies, the Dogon are agriculturalists, cultivating millet, sorghum, and rice, as well as peanuts, onions, and tobacco. Today, there are approximately between 400,000 and 800,000 Dogon people in Mali.

The Dogon





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