

HAUDENOSAUNEE

The Haudenosaunee (previously given the name Iroquois by European settlers) are also called "People of the Longhouse". They became a part of the Six Nations Confederacy, which includes the following nations: Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora. *Haudenosaunee peoples are still in existence, but this article references their life between 1713–1800.*



Corn



Winter Squash

Economic Activity

These First Nations people were known for their agricultural skills, as they planted crops of corn, beans, and squash (the three sisters). They also gathered berries, nuts and also took part in hunting and fishing. The Haudenosaunee lived in villages consisting of a few or many longhouses. These villages were surrounded by protective walls with up to several hundred people in one village. They only moved when the farmland no longer produced good crops.

Family Structure

Their family structure was a Clan System, which followed a matrilineal (based on the mother/female line) structure. The female was the Clan Mother and head of the longhouse. The longhouse was the family home made of wooden frame and covered in bark and was approximately 10 metres wide, 10 metres high and 25 metres long.

All related females lived in the same longhouse. The husbands and children would also live in the longhouse. Children called their birth mother and their mothers' sisters "mother". In addition, all the children in the longhouse called each other brother or sister. Sons were raised with their extended family until they married and moved to their wife's longhouse. History, values, and beliefs were passed on through oral stories told by elders to clan members as children and continued throughout their lives.

Daily Life

Daily life for the Haudenosaunee was divided along gender roles. Men were responsible for hunting, trapping, clearing land for new crops, building, carving and making things like bowls, mortar and pestle, bows and arrows. Women took care of planting, tending and harvesting the crops. They also cured hides, made clothing and made meals. The Haudenosaunee believed that the Creator gave them gifts, which were their values and traditions. A commonly held belief was that the human and natural world should live in harmony with one another. The Haudenosaunee gave thanks for their people, the creator, the spirit world and the natural world by celebrating with ceremonies that included prayer, dancing, stories and songs. The Haudenosaunee were affected by the new illnesses and diseases that were brought to North America by European explorers and settlers.

INUIT



Background Information

The Inuit are Indigenous people who live in the Northern Regions of Canada. *Inuit peoples are still in existence, but this article references their daily life between 1713–1800.* Their homeland was called Inuit Nanangat, which accounted for the land, water and ice around their land. They were peaceful people, who felt that family was most important. Their language was called Inuktitut. Inuit were nomadic and moved seasonally following game and resources. Their family structure consisted of 5 or 6 people. The Inuit were a very community focused culture. Food sources were community property and everyone worked together to help out the other community members.

Spiritual Life

The Inuit believed that all things (living and non-living) had a spirit. A spirit could be found in people, animals, inanimate objects and forces of nature. They believed that when something died, it continued living in the spirit world. Shamans or 'Angakoks' (religious leaders) communicated with the spirit world using charms and dances. Shamans would provide advice to people on how to calm the spirits. One of the main instruments used in Inuit Ceremonies is a one-sided drum made of caribou skin and stretched over a wooden hoop. While the drum is beating, the Inuit dance and sing stories. Important festivals occurred during the period of total darkness.



Seal

Seasons

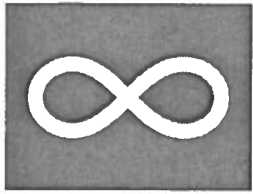
Summers were very short - no more than two months and winters were very long. In the winter months, there were periods of complete darkness when the sun did not rise for weeks. During the summer months, the Inuit lived in smaller family groups while they hunted and fished. Hunting in the summer was for caribou, seals and walrus. The Inuit lived in tents and used walking, kayaks and umiaks (a large hide covered boat) as sources of transportation. Umiaks could be several metres long and wide, and could carry 10 to 15 people.

Winters were long and cold. In the winter, the Inuit travelled on foot or by dog sled. They lived in large settlements of up to 100 people. The water was frozen, so they spent their time ice fishing and hunting beavers. Igloos or driftwood turf homes were used as temporary winter housing. Whale oil and seal blubber were used as heat and light sources during the long dark winter months.

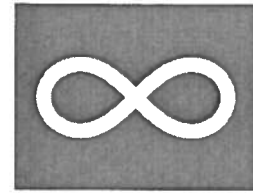
Interactions With Europeans

When Europeans arrived to explore the far north the Inuit acted as guides, traders, and taught these European newcomers survival skills. European explorers and traders shared their knowledge and traded with the Inuit peoples.

These explorers brought diseases like Smallpox from Europe, that killed large numbers of Indigenous people, who had not been previously exposed to these diseases. The explorers overfished and hunted taking large amounts back to Europe. This left the Inuit with very little resources so they had to find new areas to live.



MÉTIS



Historical Background

The Métis Nation are people of both First Nations and European heritage. The name was given to children born to European men (explorers, fur traders, settlers) and Indigenous women. The Constitution of Canada formally recognizes The Métis as a Canadian Indigenous group. Historically, Métis communities were created along fur trading routes. Their lives were a mix of European and First Nations cultures. *Métis people are still in existence, but this article references their life between 1713–1800.*

Marriage

The marriage of these two cultures helped create trade connections among the Europeans and Indigenous people. The Métis sold their furs and got access to European material goods from the traders. Two major European fur trading companies, The North West Company and The Hudson's Bay Company, recognized the value of these marriages.

Settlements

Métis communities were established in the Red River area of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, as well as around the Great Lakes area of Ontario, Quebec, near the Mackenzie River in British Columbia and The Northwest Territories.

Spiritual Life

The Métis merged Christian (Protestant or Catholic) beliefs with traditional Indigenous spiritual practices. Fiddle music and intricate dancing are also very important to the Métis.

MÉTIS

Daily Life

Some Métis farmed and lived in cabins. Other Métis led a nomadic life, living in tents and following buffalo herds. Common transportation methods used were dogs, horses and oxen to pull carts, wagons, toboggans and sleds. They were familiar with and appreciated both of their ancestral cultures and blended both to accommodate their needs. History, traditions, customs and knowledge from generation to generation were passed along through stories. Their language was called Michif.

Métis women were used as translators between the European and Indigenous languages. They were skilled in surviving Canadian winters with their cooking and sewing skills. They made clothing that would be useful for the winter. Daughters carried on the roles taught by their mothers, while sons continued on the career paths of their fathers as traders, hunters, and farmers. Métis men acted as guides and interpreters for the fur traders and explorers, as well as farmers, fishermen, and hunters.



Bison

Traditional Métis food included: bannock, berries, fish, buffalo meat, garden vegetables and pemmican. Pemmican is a mix of fried buffalo meat and fat with berries. When stored properly, it can last up to a year. It was a key food for fur traders due to its long shelf life.