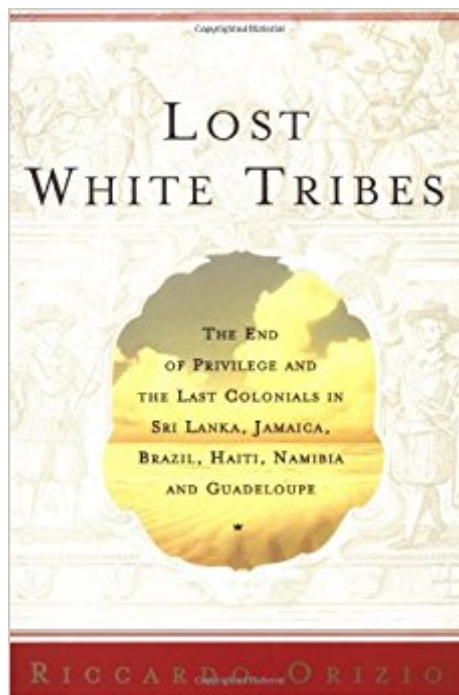




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Lost White Tribes: The End Of Privilege And The Last Colonials In Sri Lanka, Jamaica, Brazil, Haiti, Namibia, And Guadeloupe



Synopsis

Over 300 hundred years ago, the first European colonists landed in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean to found permanent outposts of the great empires. This epic migration continued until after World War II, when some of these tropical colonies became independent black nations and the white colonials were forced -- or chose -- to return to the mother country. Among the descendants of the colonizing powers, however, were some who had become outcasts in the poorest strata of society and, unable to afford the long journey home, were left behind, ignored by both the former oppressed indigenous population and the modern privileged white immigrants. At the dawn of the twenty-first century these lost white tribes still hold out, tucked away in remote valleys and hills or in the midst of burgeoning metropolises, living in poverty while tending the myths of their colonial ancestors. Forced to marry within their own group if they hope to retain their fair-skinned "purity," they are torn between the memory of past privilege and the extraordinary pressure to integrate. All are decreasing in number; some are on the verge of extinction and fighting to survive in countries that ostracize them because of the color of their skin and the traditions they represent. Though resident for generations, these people are permanently out of place, an awkward and embarrassing reminder of things past in newly redefined countries that are eager to forget both them and their historical homelands. In the remote interior and in bustling Sao Paulo, the "Confederados" of Brazil linger on, the descendants of Confederate families that fled the American South to rebuild their society here rather than face victorious Yankees. Wrenchingly poor then and now, these would-be genteel planters cling to their romanticized memory of a proud antebellum past. In Sri Lanka, once Ceylon, the children of Dutch Burghers haunt their crumbling mansions, putting on airs and keeping up appearances. In the steaming jungle of Guadeloupe, the inbred and deformed Matignons Blancs scrape out an existence while claiming the blood of French kings in their veins. On the beaches of Jamaica, a young man with incongruously blond dreadlocks -- the destitute descendant of a shoemaker from the Duchy of Saxony who became an indentured servant to earn passage from Germany to the new world -- still gazes out at the Caribbean over a century and half later. The Poles of Haiti are descended from troops lured over by Napoleon to quell slave rebellions. His promise of independence for their homeland went unfulfilled; they persist in hidden valleys in the island's interior. In the desert expanses of Southwest Africa, the famously devout Basters, the green-eyed, mixed-race Afrikaners, still doggedly pursue vast territorial claims as the continent's new power brokers sweep them aside. These are the lost white tribes. More than an entree into a world we are unfamiliar with, this amazing chronicle opens up a world that we did not even know existed. In his masterful report, Riccardo Orizio has written the final chapter in the history of the

postcolonial world, and in him these forgotten peoples have found their unique historian.

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Customer Reviews

As a person who loves history and anthropology, the title of this book really got my attention and I eagerly anticipated the arrival of this book. I suppose anyone who wants to know more about the descendants of Europeans living in exotic and remote corners of the world would find this topic very interesting. The author tells of how (and under what circumstances) the ancestors of these peoples got there. He also describes the lives of the members of these communities. These groups are quickly diminishing in numbers due to emigration, assimilation/intermarriage and inbreeding. The title "Lost White Tribes" is rather misleading though, as only the Jamaican Germans, the Blanc Matignons and some of the Confederados are actually whites. The Dutch Burghers, the Rehoboth Basters, and many of the Confederados as well as the Haitian Poles are in fact mixed-race peoples (ie. Eurasians and Afro-European). From the author's description, the Haitian Poles despite proudly claiming to be Polish are mainly of African descent with some white admixture. Hence, I was quite surprised that notwithstanding the title and the fact that there are so many white groups and sub-groups in the New World, including some who live amongst a non-white majority, the author has chosen to include these communities. There are still French white creole communities in Mauritius and the Caribbean islands, Mennonites in Belize as well as various distinct communities made up of descendants of Germans and other continental Europeans in Latin America. When I was in the Philippines, I found out that there were still many wealthy Spanish families descended from 16th century settlers.

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