

## Germanic Tribes (The Teutonic) Are Still Alive And Kickin' :-)

I don't think it's fair that when most people talk or read about history that most of it's about war. Sure, war (or the constant threat of warfare) was a fact of life, however, there was much more to daily life. History is much more than who's fighting where, when, and why.

Never was this more evident than the history of the Germanic Tribes, often called the Teutonic, a people thought to have originated from somewhere in Northern Europe in a time period called Late Antiquity, ending around the Early Middle Ages.

And I ain't saying that these guys didn't go off to war or pillage somewhere — but they did have settlements, a hierarchy, and gave rise to some infamous (I mean famous, depending on how you look at it) names in history (like the Franks, Saxons, Anglos, Lombards, Vikings, Merovingians, and Goths).

Whew, reads like a who's who of European invaders, doesn't it?

Starting sometime in the Nordic Bronze Age (~1700-600 B.C.), archaeology has shown Germanic Tribes lived in the area of [Schleswig-Holstein](#) and [Hamburg](#), eventually spreading out along the [Elbe](#), [Danube](#), and [Rhine](#) Rivers as well as the [Baltic Sea](#).

By around 250 B.C. the Germanic Tribes were living in the Rhine-Weser and [North Sea](#) area, too. A huge migration of these tribes took place over the course of 300 years, from around the 2nd to 5th century A.D. By this time, areas of Austria, Switzerland, England, and Scandinavia were settled by the Teutonic; who also invaded Italy and Gaul (parts of modern day France).

Many of these Germanic Tribes were pagans; and eventually Christianized (the Goths were the first). By the time Charlemagne came during his Saxon War Campaign, many of these tribes were already Christian. But, he did see to it that anyone holding on to their pagan beliefs was severely "punished."

But on an average day, who were these Germanic Tribes? How did they live? What did they do? What did they eat? What role did women play in everyday society?

As proper, let's start with ladies first. Women (or I should say Free Women, cause the Germanic Tribes had slaves) weren't able to "rule" in their own right. Their status (or rank) in society was dictated by either their husband's or father's social status.

However, the penalty for hurting or killing a woman was two times the "penalty" for that of a man (see, I told you they had a hierarchy). The women of the Teutonic did the weaving and spinning, as well as raise the children and cook.

Families lived together in small settlements, often less than a dozen households; and lived in the same dwellings as their livestock. They grew barley, hunted, brewed beer, danced, created their own form of art, and practiced husbandry (breeding livestock — because social status was determined by size). A reconstructed Germanic settlement can be seen in [Fritzlar](#)-Geismar — a real life look into the time period.

Of course, not all settlements were exactly alike; and most noticeable differences were seen between the Celtic and Germanic culture within what is today's Germany. Julius Caesar wrote about the Germani people in 51 B.C., noting that promiscuity (which was rampant in Ancient Rome) was severely frowned upon (disgraceful was the word he used).

It was unthinkable (according to good old Julius) that a man should be with a woman before turning 20 years old, downright middle-age back then.

See, it wasn't always about war. The "S-word" played a part in daily Germani life, otherwise there wouldn't have been anyone of us left. ;-)

Eventually the last of the Germanic Tribes were assimilated into the [Holy Roman Empire](#) sometime in the 10th century; and the Teutonic settlements gave rise to the Feudal System and cities like [Köln \(Cologne\)](#), [Mainz](#), and [Aachen](#).

The "common" language of the Germanic Tribes can still be heard (well, partly) today, since German, Dutch, and English are considered Germanic languages. Duh, on the German, right? ;-)

Funny, I always thought "Love" was the common language... I just hope you're over 20 before you "speak" it.

Hey, what can I say — I stem from a Germanic Tribe! ;-)