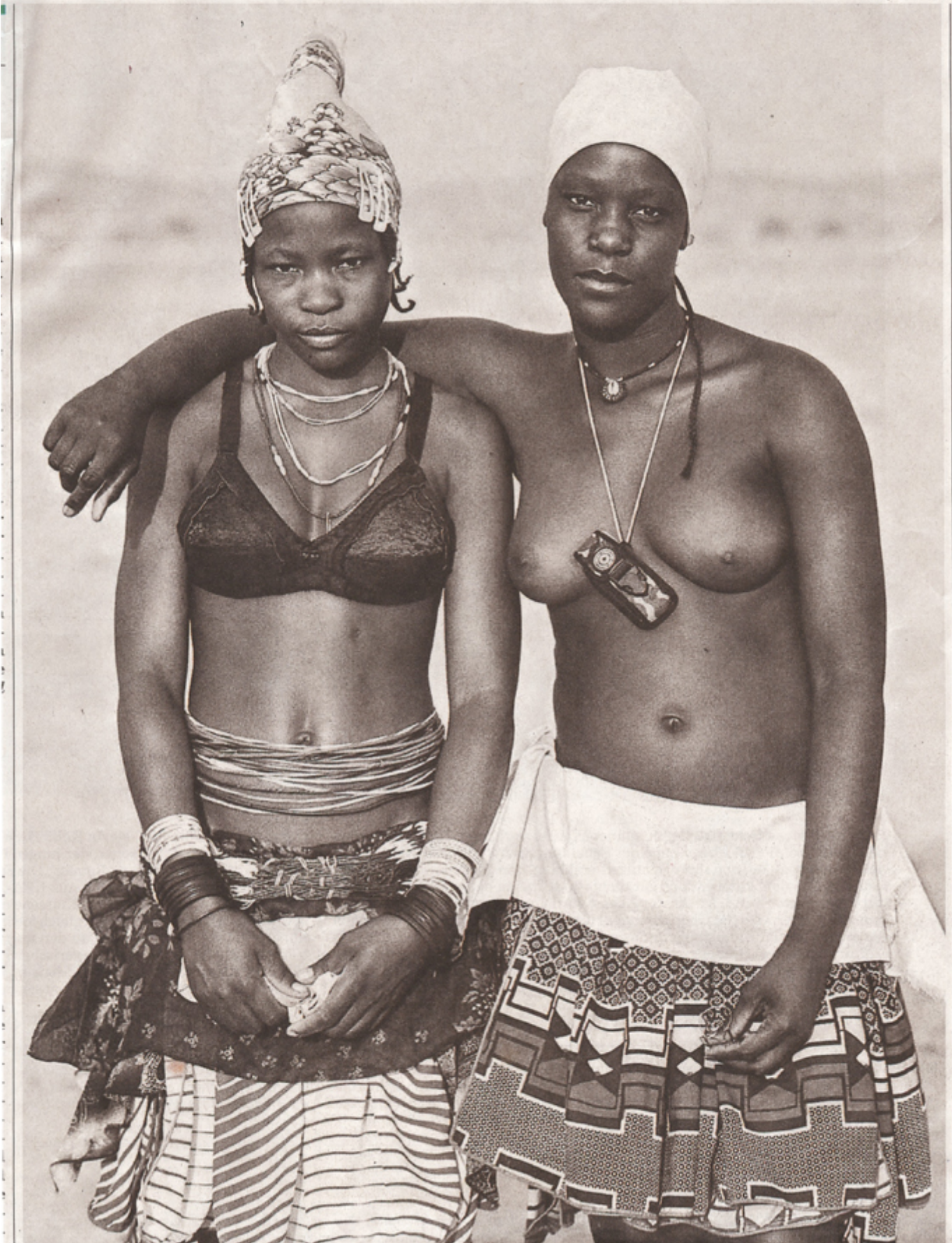


KULTUR

Süddeut:



Bl
vo
bl
Fl
de
ve
wi
ge
N
re
od
M
al
w
di
na
St
St
Sa

En
Ba
lic
El
ak
w
rä
of
m
ei

vi
ur
ge
de
tr
lic
ze
fe
ei
tr
de
ho
ne

sc
ni
ga
lic
di
tie
de
w
ar
le
be



Between The Times

Tradition and the Present: Dana Gluckstein's photographs show indigenous people in a state of change

By Evelyn Vogel

Munich – Above all one can see pride on the faces of the people, pride in tradition, pride also in being modern – also when it sometimes brings a smile to the observer. So then why couldn't a bra openly worn like a bikini top be considered a fashion accessories in the same way a mobile phone case on a chain is worn around the neck like a piece of jewellery made by Ovazamba girls from Namibia . After all, fashion designers always like to put absurd looking accessories on their models and call their flashy creations up to date crossover fashion.

It often bothers observers from the west when indigenous people try to preserve their tribal traditions, but on the other side adapt modern elements in their lives as a matter of course. When they wear this cultural meltdown with so much pride it seems to us like the first step in the downfall of tradition and a loss of identity. One can see these people as no longer in yesterday, but also not in the present.

The American photographer Dana Gluckstein now showing her work in the Galerie on the Pinakothek der Moderne, wants to reveal this special moment of change. She is a successful photographer who took pictures of Michael Gorbatschow, Nelson Mandela, Muhammad Ali,

Jane Russell, Barbara Streisand, Toni Curtis, Gregory Peck, and many other stars, as well as doing a big advertising campaign for Toyota. While she was travelling in the 1980's, she noticed how fascinated she was by this "Clash Of Cultures". She was horrified how systematically old traditions and cultures were being destroyed, but touched by the dignity of the people, so she began to take more and more of these photographs. "These pictures are becoming more important for me. I looked for the pride in their faces and was surprised how strong and full of life indigenous people are."

"Tribes In Transition" was the first series taken in Haiti and Africa. The photo on an old woman with a pipe in her mouth taken in Haiti in 1983 has a special meaning for Dana Gluckstein, "It defined my direction". This was followed by more trips to Africa, Asia, South America, and the Pacific area. She found people in Hawaii that are returning to their old culture, "That was a revival." On the Fiji Islands there was a portrait of war veterans that fought in Iraq as part of the "coalition of the willing" in 2003. The necktie that was shown to her with pride had the national flag of the USA not Fiji. In 2010 she went to the long isolated land of Bhutan. Even there she saw how the influence of Hollywood and Bollywood brought about the clash of modern and traditional. "A young boy was wearing the traditional gho at a religious festival, but was holding a plastic toy gun in his hand" she remembered.

No matter what stage of change Dana Gluckstein found the indigenous people, she was always searching for their soul, and that's something she was able to do. Many of the black and white still portraits were neither pathetic nor a glorification of the noble savage. She shows the people with a deep understanding of their past and for their seemingly untold leap in time to a western influenced present.

Some of these photos also tell stories about where a people came from and what remains of their past after a period of change. In this process Dana Gluckstein still swears by her 30 year old Hasselblad Camera, and she develops all the negatives herself. "It's old fashioned but it gives me the feeling that what I'm doing is important and right. She dedicated her illustrated book "Dignity" to the 50 year existence of Amnesty International. The current Exhibition will be shown in Munich, Berlin, Geneva, and in the U.S.A.