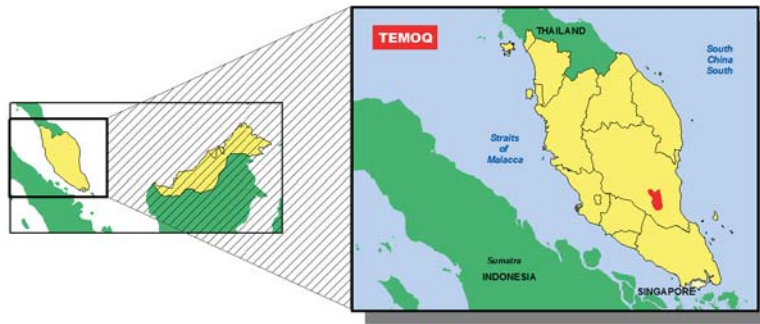


TEMOQ



Population	Major Religion	Language
350	Animism	Temoq

Who are the Temoq?

The Temoq are one of the nineteen Orang Asli people groups of Peninsular Malaysia. The government categorizes them under the Senoi subgroup.

The name Temoq means “wild people,” and they tend to be disliked by the ethnic groups around them. A nickname for the Temoq is “people of the forest fringe”. Other tribes think of the Temoq as wild and uncultured. They claim the Temoq do not cook their meat or eat salt. It is said they share a heritage with the Semelai people—a cultural legacy connecting them to the forest and the power that lies there. In fact, they are closely related to the Semelai linguistically.

The Temoq are largely found in the Jeram River valley in the Termerluh district of Pahang. In the past they were also living in the upper reaches of the Sungai Bera and on the eastern side of Tasek Bera in Pahang.

What are their lives like?

Traditionally, the Temoq were hunters and gatherers who sometimes had small rice plots on the hillsides. They also practiced blowpipe hunting. With their greater orientation to blowpipe hunting, the Temoq appear to have been much more land-oriented in their meat procurement. They were also more likely to hunt land turtles with dogs. It appeared that the only goods they needed from the outside world were knives, spear and axe heads, tobacco and salt, which they got by barter.

However, the loss of forest to logging and land development has been devastating to the Temoq economy. They depend on wild tubers, fruit, game, and fish for their basic nutrition. They practice

shifting cultivation and collect jungle produce while

growing a wide variety of crops and raising chickens and goats. The loss of raw materials from the forest means substitutes must be bought from their already modest incomes.

What do they believe?

The religion of the Temoq people has been described as “formless animism” due to their belief in a vague spirit world made up of ghosts and disease spirits. They are also deep in occult practice. A certain Temoq charm is said to be able to give its owner the supernatural ability to travel great distances in very short time periods. It is believed that Temoq shamans often perform healing rituals for people of other tribes, especially the Semelai tribe.

Two features characterize their culture: they have a great fear of violence and a strong belief in each individual’s personal freedom. These characteristics permeate every part of the society and influence most of their actions. They view man as free but also alone in the world and thus continually exposed to danger.

What are their needs?

Development projects are rapidly taking over huge pieces of forested land, which the Temoq once roamed freely in search of food. Some Temoq can no longer find their daily supply of resources from the forest. Pray that God will grant wisdom to believers so that they may know the best way to help the Temoq people. Pray also for local believers to reach out to their unique needs.