

Chapter 2: The Native Societies of the Americas Before Contact

Essay Questions

1. How did gender function in sedentary, semisedentary, and hunter and gatherer societies? In other words, what did the gendered division of labor look like in these societies? What did gender roles look like in these societies?

Page Ref: 13; 21-22; 26

*Topic: Landholding Patterns and Forms of Production and Distribution;
Semisedentary Societies; Nonsedentary Hunters and Gatherers*

2. How did the chiefs of semisedentary societies differ from the rulers in sedentary societies?

Page Ref: 15; 25

*Topic: Landholding Patterns and Forms of Production and Distribution;
The Primacy of Community and Lineage*

3. On the eve of contact, the native populations in the Americas rivaled the populations of the Old World. How can the significant population density achieved by the American peoples be explained?

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Topic: The Native Population of the Americas on the Eve of Contact

4. How did land and geography influence the emergence of American societies?

Page Ref: 6-7

*Topic: The Coming of Humans to the Americas and the Agricultural
Revolution*

5. What were some of the major scientific and technological innovations of the sedentary societies?

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Topic: Sedentary Imperial Societies

6. Why did some sedentary societies shift into semisedentary societies?

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Topic: The Primacy of Community and Lineage

7. What kinds of warfare tactics did hunters and gatherers use? Why did their tactics differ from those of sedentary or semisedentary societies?

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Topic: Nonsedentary Hunters and Gatherers

8. How were men and women organized by gender in hunter and gatherer societies? Did this gendered division of power impact other aspects of community life?

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Topic: Nonsedentary Hunters and Gatherers

9. How did the lack of domesticated animals influence the emergence of native societies in the Americas?

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Topic: The Coming of Humans to the Americas and the Agricultural Revolution

10. How was land held in sedentary societies?

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Topic: Landholding Patterns and Forms of Production and Distribution