

Compare and
contrast the societies
of mesoamerica and
the eastern
woodlands in 14...

[History](#)



COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE SOCIETIES OF MESOAMERICA AND THE EASTERN WOODLANDS IN 1491 America had been inhabited by natives, descendants of Siberians, before the arrival of Columbus in 1492. The natives also known as Indians who occupied America had similar cultures despite speaking different languages and dialects¹.

The Eastern Woodland Indians were Native Americans that inhabited the eastern part of the United States and Canada. This group of Indians had been known to live in northwestern states such as Tennessee and Kentucky.

Traditionally, Eastern Woodland Indians lived in homes built from trees, bark, and grass. Fathers and sons were the primary builders and providers.

Women did not participate in building homes but assisted in working in the fields. The Eastern Woodland Indians were mainly hunters and gatherers².

The natives mostly spoke Algonquin or Iroquois.

The Mesoamerican Indians were inhabitants of Mexico and Northern Central America. The main tribes were Mayans, Olmec, Aztecs, and Incas. They lived in caves and other structures carved out of stone. Mesoamerican Indians were the first to cultivate corn, potatoes, varieties of beans, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, chocolate, rubber, cotton and tobacco. The Indians in Mexico developed corn by a breeding process so sophisticated that the journal of science described it as “ man's first and perhaps the greatest feat at genetic engineering”.

The natives made different discoveries based on different experiences and ways of life. The Mesoamerican and Eastern Woodland Indians had occupied different parts of America with the eastern Indians occupying the rain forest. Due to this woodland Indians discovered different uses for wood. They made

hunting tools, houses, canoes and cooking utensils. The natives who lived near water bodies used the canoes for transport. The Mesoamericans mainly used tools curved out of stone for example, farming tools that were curved out of stone.

Both inhabitants practiced farming for food, but they practiced it differently. The Eastern Woodland Indians cleared the forest in order to create more space for farming or when the land got exhausted while the Mesoamericans specifically the Amazonian Indians learned how to farm in the rain forest without destroying it, a process scientists are studying today in the hope of regaining this lost knowledge. The Mesoamericans were very advanced in agriculture.

The Native Indians are said to have been the 'mother of civilization.' The Mesoamerican Indians having secured their food supply, turned to intellectual pursuits. They invented their own writing, astronomy and mathematics. They were able to come up with structures that they used for religious purposes³. They started trade amongst themselves with the Teotihuacan being involved in trading relationships as far away as the Mayan lowlands. The Olmec came up with irrigated agriculture, an elaborate religion and a calendar. The people of Mesoamerica played a ritual ball game on specially constructed courts in which the players moved a ball with their hips or elbows. The losers would forfeit their possessions or lives. This is as written by Sharer Robert in Daily Life in Maya Civilisation. The Eastern Woodland Indians, on the other hand, depended mainly on rain water for their agricultural activities. The area also had numerous lakes and rivers where they fished. Archeologists believe that the Eastern Woodland Indians

did not have a secure food supply and would sometimes turn to eating their clothes when hunger stroke.

Bibliography

Sharer, Robert J. Daily Life in Maya Civilization (The Greenwood Press Daily Life Through History Series). Greenwood Pub Group, Westport, Connecticut, 2011.