

## 2 Study questions on Gladney 1-24, Nagel 3-13, Eriksen, 1-17

1. Gladney discusses difficulties he encountered doing fieldwork on a nationality in China. What were they? What is the stereotypical anthropological fieldwork, and how did his differ from this model?
2. Why do you think so many people thought (and continue to think) that China's population is culturally very homogeneous?
3. Describe the criteria that are used to distinguish the 56 "official" nationalities.
4. What are some of the reasons China pays attention to its nationalities?
5. Discuss some of the criteria the Chinese state has employed to determine whether a group belongs to the Han majority or an official nationality.
6. Discuss the reasons why, right before the Peoples' Republic of China was established, some groups wanted to be considered official nationalities.
7. Gladney compares the Han dynasty to the Roman Empire. Discuss the points he makes.
8. A way to better understand China is to imagine what Europe would have been like if the unity of the Roman Empire had lasted until now. Discuss.
9. Gladney discusses a "new feeling" in China, a "revalorization" of something. Discuss what it is, and why you think this shift happened.
10. Discuss the north-south tensions that Gladney describes. Do you know of similar tensions in other countries?
11. Why did scholars feel that ethnicity in China was inconsequential?
12. Nagel says that at the time of the earliest European contact with North America there were no American Indians. Discuss.
13. Nagel says that American Indians are an ethnically plural population. Then she says that, "Indians" are no more or less real a group than are "Kurds," "Africans," "Latinos," "blacks," or "Arabs." Discuss.
14. Nagel says that seeing American Indians as an ethnic group is problematic. Why?
15. Are Indian tribes *sovereign nations*? If not, should they be? If not, are they *nations*? How do they differ from immigrant ethnic groups?

16. Nagel also says American Indians, both tribes and the larger category “Indian,” are ethnic groups. Argue in favor of this position. Against it.
17. How are American Indians a minority, as Vine Deloria suggests (Nagel, pp. 8-9)?
18. What is “ethnogenesis”? Apply this concept to American Indians. Apply it to the Hui.
19. Discuss the history of the meaning of the word “ethnic.”
20. Describe the main points of Marx’s understanding of social class. Weber’s. What does “class” mean to you?
21. On p. 15 Eriksen discusses “plural states”—that is, states that contain more than one ethnic group. Can you name a state that is *not* a plural state?
22. List the reasons Eriksen gives as to why ethnicity did not decline as a result of 20<sup>th</sup> century processes like modernization, industrialization, and the growth of individualism.
23. Discuss Eriksen’s definition of nationalism, on p. 7.

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