Woodland Period
500 B.C-200 A.D.

Adena Culture

Society

The Adena people were mobile hunter-gatherer-gardeners. The Adena people lived in extended family groups of roughly 15 to 20 people. Several extended families formed a lineage or clan. Between four to six lineage/clans would have made up an Adena social group. Leaders likely led by consent, and leadership was awarded based on merit. Division of labor was based on gender and age. Men would have been responsible for clearing the ground and hunting. Women would have been responsible for raising the children, gathering, and gardening. Religious leaders and healers, of both sexes, were elders.

Settlement

The Adena people lived in small camps, often on terraces by streams or on ridgetops, and rock shelters. They moved within their home territories to best make use of seasonal wildlife and plants. They did not always return to their campsites year after year. Their homes would have been small, around 200 square feet, and most of their daily activities would have taken place outside.

Health

Adena people, heavily built and strong, were small in stature. They rarely grew to 6ft tall. Like preindustrial people worldwide. Adena people generally did not live much past 45 years old. Most people experienced periods of malnutrition and infection in childhood. As adults, many suffered from arthritis, anemia, and infections.

Trade

Adena people traded locally with their neighbors. They also participated in long-distance trade networks. They traded local barite for copper and marine shells.