

HIST222

Unit 6 Assessment: “Primary Source Analysis: Rigoberta Menchú Tum”

Earlier in the course, in the Unit 4 assessment, “Primary Source Analysis: The Brazilian Coffee Industry,” you practiced analyzing a primary source from 1911. One of the common misconceptions about primary sources is that they have to be old. That is simply not true. Primary sources are firsthand accounts of history, and they can include interviews, memoirs, diaries, and many other types of resources. In this assessment, you will practice analyzing a 1992 interview with Rigoberta Menchú Tum, who was a recipient of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize. She is an indigenous Guatemalan, and her career has been dedicated to advancing the rights of indigenous people in Guatemala. The following questions will help to direct your analysis of her interview.

1. In the introduction to the interview, what two major historical events provide the context in which Rigoberta Menchú was interviewed regarding indigenous people?
2. What happened to Menchú’s family and how did that affect her?
3. What is Menchú’s opinion of the celebration of the 500th anniversary of Columbus discovering the Americas? How does she say it has affected the struggles of indigenous people?
4. What can we learn from Menchú’s interview about the demographics of Guatemala?
5. What does Menchú’s story about the summit in San Jose, Portugal, reveal about the Guatemalan delegation?
6. How does Menchú explain the ongoing (at the time) civil war in Guatemala?
7. What does Menchú say about the role of the international community in the conflict?
8. According to Menchú, how did her Nobel Prize candidacy contribute to peace in Guatemala?
9. Menchú refers to the idea of *impunity* often in her interview. What does she mean by impunity?
10. In what ways does Menchú connect the struggles of her countrymen and women in Guatemala to the rest of the world?

