

Lower-Division 2010 Writing Contest Winner: Non Source Use Essay

The Sun Pyramid

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(Written for Ms. Lamptey's English 099 Class)

In the past in Central and South America numerous tribes and ethnic groups were associated with spiritual guiding and astrological leading. Many cultures were involved in the development of societies and traditions; the Mayan culture was one of the most important representative culture groups in Central America. As a symbol of their society and beliefs, the Mayans built the Sun Pyramid which is the largest pyramid in Mexico. Presently, many people think that this pyramid does not symbolize the values of Mexican society, and they disregard the importance of the history, traditions, and customs that this pyramid represents to the Mexican people. However, the Sun Pyramid should be preserved because it is a strong inspiration for young Mexican athletes, it brings fantasy and mystery to the Mexican people, and it is an important source of knowledge for future generations.

First of all, the Sun Pyramid should be preserved because it motivates young Mexican athletes. Since Mayan times, sports have been a way to honor the ancestors and for many centuries this tradition has passed from generation to generation. Today many young Mexican athletes are inspired by this belief, and soccer has become the most important sport in Mexico, just like it was in the old times. To illustrate, the Mayans specially built large fields at the base of the Sun Pyramid to play soccer. The players were carefully selected depending on their physical strength, their intelligence, and their athletic abilities. The winning team was sacrificed to honor the Mayan gods; for this culture this was the best gift that the Mayans could offer to their gods. In the present day, the Mexican youth is inspired by the courage and the attitude of competition of their ancestors. Therefore, young Mexican athletes have won many soccer championships, and they have made Mexico an outstanding competitor in this sport. Moreover, soccer is a big influence on the Mexican youth not only for males but also for females who have been awarded many prizes for winning. In the Mexican society, the Sun Pyramid is an inspiration for many adolescent athletes; they have kept the attitude of being the best as their ancestors did.

Second, the Sun Pyramid should be conserved because it portrays mystical and magical personalities that represent the beliefs of the Mexican people. In the past, Mexican culture had a lot personalities with mystical powers especially gods and kings. For example, Quetzalcoatl a Mayan god who was in charge of controlling the rain helped Mayans to sow and crop their fruits and vegetables, particularly corn and cocoa. These seeds later became the most desirable food among other cultures from Central and South America. Therefore, corn and cocoa were the Mayans currency which made this civilization the most influential and richest culture at that time. Mayans built the Sun Pyramid to honor their god Quetzalcoatl, who magically transformed his body into a bird and his heart was converted into the morning star when he died. Many personalities like Quetzalcoatl have made Mexican people believe and transmit their traditions to subsequent generations. Currently, this pyramid is an inspirational place for some who believe in the spiritual powers of this god. To illustrate, every spring, many people wear white clothes, and walk to the peak of the Sun Pyramid to take in the sun's new energy and to watch

Quetzalcoatl god descend over the pyramid transformed as a shadow snake. Further, many people believe that by taking in the new energy of the sun, they will cure their illness. The Mexican people believe in the mystery and magic of the Sun Pyramid and the effect that this can have on them. Mexico is rich in traditions and beliefs, and the Sun Pyramid represents an important part of its ancestral and mystical past.

Finally, the Sun Pyramid should be maintained because it is a source of knowledge for future generations. The Mayan culture was one of the smartest civilizations in America and its mathematical system was very precise. By observing the sky and studying the stars they calculated and predicted many events. For example, the Sun Pyramid was not just built in a random place; the Mayan located this position using astrological reading of the stars and the moon. Moreover, the Sun Pyramid has some characteristics associated with the Mayan calendar. To illustrate, the Mayan calendar counted the days of planet movements and the rotation of each one in the Solar system. Furthermore, this calendar is divided in 365 parts similar to the 365 steps at the principal entrance of the Sun Pyramid, matching exactly with the numbers of the days in today's calendar. The Mayan calendar also coincides with other scientific predictions that have been made by modern studies such as the end of the human race on December 21 of 2012. This prediction is also supported by other cultures' predictions like the Chinese calendar which also estimates the same event. In addition, many historical artifacts have been discovered in the Sun Pyramid which have helped scientists, anthropologists, and historians to understand the Mayan culture, and to explain how this calendar was made with so much precision and coherency at that time. The Sun Pyramid not only has brought important artifacts that have help to guide scientist to understand the accurate predictions that this culture made at that time, but the it has also become a significant resource of knowledge.

In conclusion, the Sun Pyramid should be conserved because many generations would have the opportunity to learn about their past, their culture, and their traditions. The Sun Pyramid is not only a symbol of power and beliefs for the Mexican youth but also it is a motivation for people to overcome illnesses. By preserving the Sun Pyramid, future generations can maintain the history of an influential and bright civilization and also the fantasy and mystery of it.