The Maya

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**Introduction**

Since the beginning of the time, the world has seen many civilizations, which came and made the world know about their rituals and traditions. Every civilization that happened in this world introduced come cultural norms or customs, which were followed by the people of that civilization. Some of these traditions were normal and very ordinary in nature, whereas others were very weird and unusual, that still baffles the mind of any individual who comes to know about them. Later on, these traditions became the identity of these nations or civilizations, and the world began knowing these civilizations due to their unique practices.

Many examples are spread across the globe that show us the history and glory of various civilizations. Some of the refinements were famous for their bravery, like the Hans civilization and some were very notable with respect to trade. Some civilizations became famous due to their many advancements in intellectual and scientific fields, just like Western Civilization, whereas other some other civilization got fame due to their rich culture and various cultural explorations, just like Muslim or Islamic Civilization. One prominent example of great civilizations in the history of the world is the Maya Civilization.

Maya Civilization is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and is famous for its unique set of traditions and values. It is one of the most diverse civilizations that existed in Northern America. The people who were included in this civilization are also known as Maya people. Maya people were especially famous for the logo-syllabic script, which is the most highly developed and the most sophisticated writing style in America before the Colombian time. Along with that, they made great discoveries and advancements in architecture, art, mathematics, astronomical systems, and calendar. Maya Civilization was unique; their values were different, they were the most sophisticated and advanced civilization of the pre-historic times that walked this Earth; how, this paper will discuss.

**Discussion**

**History**

The history of Mayan Civilization dates back to 1800 BC when the earliest traces of Maya settlements are found. At that time, Maya people were inclined towards agriculture and used to grow crops like corn, cassava, beans, and squash. The Middle Pre-Classic Era lasted till 300 BC in which the Maya people started expanding their agricultural activities to highlands and lowlands both (Douglas et al., 2016). The Maya people borrowed many of their cultural and religious practices from the Olmecs, one of another culturally rich Mesoamerican civilization.

One of the distinct quality or traits of the Maya people during the preclassic times was pyramid building and city construction, along with inscribing of stone monuments (Chase, & Rice, 2014). The Preclassical city of Mirador is a bright example of the construction skills of the Maya people.

**Cultural Context**

Mayans were really peaceful and art loving people. They almost never indulged in wars and stuck firmly to their values and beliefs. In fact, Mayan lands were known as the lands of saints and priests. The people from the Maya Civilization stood very true to their values and religion and conducted various religious rituals. Moreover, they were deeply interested in the arts and sciences. Their produced artworks, sculptures, buildings still represent the diverse and rich culture present at the time of Mayan people.

**Represented in the United States**

Mayan people are the ones that introduced the modern writing system to society. Mayan people are being given equal opportunities in the society and the system so that they can promote their culture and show their values to the world. The Mayan people from the Yucatán Peninsula have been arranging cooking classes since 2003 in California tend multiple other states in order to introduce the world to their unique tastes.

**Individualistic/Collective**

Mayan culture is a collectivist culture whose individuals remain together and prosper together. The people have made progress together keeping their values together. The positive thing about Mayan people is that they never left their culture and their values behind while making progress.

**Artistic**

The Maya people were highly artistic people and were especially famous for their creative works. Their trademark or unique specialty was their symbolic art. Some of the greatest artists of Mesoamerica were from the Maya tribe. May people were known for their sophisticated and detailed artworks. People from Maya Civilization created artworks from both perishable and non-perishable goods, like ceramics, obsidian, jade, wood, stucco, sculpted stone monuments and finely painted murals. Mayan art depicts royalty and the elegance of the elite class. It also shows a deep connection to their roots, their ancestors.

**Values**

Mayan culture and values were greatly dependent on their religion. Their values significantly involve astronomy, nature, and rituals. Mayan mostly worshipped gods that represented nature, like Yum Kaax, Kinih Ahous , The Sun God or The Maize God, etc. They were significantly popular for their astronomical building structures and calendars which they used extensively for religious gatherings (Inomata et al., 2016).

**Religion**

Maya people were one of the most spiritual and religious civilizations in history. They believed in many gods and worshipped them according to like they had gods of the Sun and the sun, the moon, the rain, the prosperity, and the corn. They used to build temples and religious places according to the season and their religious needs; the only significant factor was that all the sacred places were in a pyramid shape. The king was given the highest regard in a Maya society, who was known as "Kuhul Ajaw" (Holy lords). It was a general perception that the kings are a mediator between god and an ordinary man. Thus, the kingship used to pass down in the same family, and it was hereditary.

**Sex and Gender Roles**

Just like any other society, Maya civilization was also patriarchal in nature. Mostly, the men used to indulge in agricultural activities and were considered responsible for the economic uplifting of the family. They used to take important decisions for the family and equally shard the domestic responsibilities with their females.

Just like the male members of their community, women in the Mayan culture constituted equal rights in society. They contributed significantly in the cultural, economic and agricultural growth of the society. Although the part of women’s' role in the society has not been clearly documented in the Mayan scripts found during various discoveries, the role of women has been accepted and even appreciated at many places. Apart from the traditional roles of cooking and raising children, the women also helped their men in the fields and household industries. One of the most common industry at that time was textile, so the women lent a helping hand in the creation and development of textile products and then sold them for a living.

**Acculturation**

With the rapid developments and the multiple incidents of invasions from various foreigners, the Mayan people had to assimilate in the cultures of others and adopt certain traditions from them, but they never left their original values and are still loyal to them.

**Conclusion**

In a nut shell, it can be seen that the Maya Civilization was a rich and diverse civilization with multiple creative and inspiring values. The people were peaceful and artistic. They worked hard in the fields of agriculture, and stayed true to their religion and values, despite making much progress.

**References**

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