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Concept Check_Sem1

Aztlan- *Information retrieved from:*

<http://www.colorado.edu/StudentGroups/MEChA/aztlan.html>

My description of what I found at the website: What I found on this webpage is that according to the Aztec peoples, Aztlan is their mythical place of origin. It is often described as an island and a place of settlement. In Nahuatl-their native language- *aztla* means “heron” and *tlan (tli)* means “place of”. According to legends, the Aztecs came out of the earth through 7 caves known as *Chicomostac* and settling in Aztlan, later migrating south in a spiritual-search of a new place to resettle. This myth resonates with historical facts showing that the Aztecs stationed themselves in a Toltec city known as *Tollan* by the end of the first millennium A.D. It is unknown where the actual location of Aztlan is, except that it is near the northwestern part of Mexico.

• **Aztecs-** *Information retrieved from:* <http://www.indians.org/welker/aztec.htm>

My description of what I found at the website: The Aztecs or *Mexicas* were Native Americans who mainly lived in the northern part of Mexico around the 16th century, when a Spanish conquest by Hernan Cortes was taking place. Eventually, the Aztec peoples ended up settling on an island known as Texcoco. In 1325, they established the town of Tenochtitlan, (modern-Mexico). The Aztecs accomplished many things in their time. They built an impressive empire and trade system, incorporated a socially stratified city and economy dependent on agriculture or cultivation of the land. They carried out many traditional and religious ceremonies dedicated to their beliefs on a yearly basis. Their relationship and connection with the earth and

nature is exemplified in their drawings and artwork. The architecture of monuments that they built and designed shows the sophistication that they had.

• **Tenochtitlan**- *Information retrieved from:* <http://www.tenochtitlanfacts.com/>

My description of what I found at the website: Known as the capital of Aztecs, Tenochtitlan (Modern Mexico) was founded in 1325. It was occupied by two groups of Aztec people who contributed to the development of cities sustained by the availability of water from an aqueduct in Chapultepec. In the city of Tecpan, located in the central plaza was a precinct wall where two main temples stood on a pyramid. After the Spaniards arrived to Tenochtitlan the population had grown to more than 200,000 by the year 1519. Religious practices by the Aztecs were practiced at the center at Tenochtitlan at their temples dedicated to their gods. In this area there were also markets, schools, an arena court for sports, and homes of priests. Many artworks such as sculptures were displayed for viewing in the area. Outside the precinct wall were the palaces of Montezuma previous rulers. The Spaniards built around Mexico City to accommodate their invasion activities. This construction resulted in the demolition of most Aztec architecture.

• **Nahuatl**- *Information retrieved from:* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nahuatl-language>

My description of what I found at the website: Nahuatl, or also commonly known as Aztec American Indian language was spoken by the Aztec and Toltec people in the central or western part of Mexico. In regards to its phonology, the use of the (tl) sound was most recognized as being quite common, as well as the glottal stop- closing of the glottis. In eastern Aztec dialects such as those spoken near Veracruz Mexico the tl sound has been replaced with the t sound. Instead of nahuatl it is pronounced Nahuat. In the western part of Mexico such as in Michoacan, the tl is substituted with the l sound and the word becomes Nahual.

• **Quetzalcoatl-** *Information retrieved from:* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Quetzalcoatl>

My description of what I found at the website: According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Quetzalcoatl is a god described as a feathered serpent who was connected to the earth and water. The Toltec people worshiped this god by performing rituals and sacrificial ceremonies. Quetzalcoatl was believed to be the god of death and resurrection. According to legend, Quetzalcoatl and his companion Xolotl were able to travel to Hell and retrieve the bones of the dead and bring them back to life, creating the present inhabitants of the planet. As one of the myths explains, Quetzalcoatl was known as a king or priest who performed ceremonies sacrificing a variety of creatures. One day, the god of night cast him out by performing black magic. Quetzalcoatl went towards the water and sacrificed himself by engulfing himself in flames of fire on a piece of wood, only to reappear as the planet Venus. There are different versions of this story.

• **Tonantzin-** *Information retrieved from:*

<https://journeyingtothegoddess.wordpress.com/tag/aztec-mythology/>

My description of what I found at the website: A female deity admired and loved by the indigenous people (Aztecs) and is also known as Lady of Guadalupe or “mother earth.” In a poem written by Antonio Valeriano and found in the Nican Mopohua in or around 1556. It tells the story of an indigenous woman who appeared to Juan Diego on a hill in Tepeyac, Mexico. She identified herself as an equal to him and spoke to him in the Nahuatl language. She tells him he is the chosen messenger to tell the Bishop about building a church on Tepeyac. She also explains to him that she is the mother of all Christians and of all Nations.

• **Huitzilopochtli**- Information retrieved from:

http://www.windows2universe.org/mythology/huitzilopochtli_sun.html

My description of what I found at the website: Aztec god of the sun and war. He is a blue man covered in Hummingbird feathers. The story of his creation and meaning says that he was conceived by a ball of feathers that fell from the heavens and touched his mother, Coatlicue. Her sister Coyolxauhqui, enticed her siblings to have Coatlicue killed because they thought she had become pregnant in an unnatural way and brought shame unto the family. When this happened, Huitzilopochtli was able to come out of her and save her from the attack or attempt on her life. Huitzilopochtli was able to cut the head of Coyolxauhqui, and then threw it into the sky, resulting in the moon that we see during the night.

• **La Noche Triste**- *Information retrieved from:*

<http://www.newhistorian.com/la-noche-triste/4187/>

My description of what I found at the website: Hernan Cortes wanted to rule the Aztec empire. With the help of his mistress- a slave which was given to him as a gift- was able to speak Maya and Aztec, which allowed Cortes to manipulate and use the Aztec king. One night, Cortes led his men to fight against Velasquez, who was searching for him throughout Mexico. On this particular night, there was a festival going on and under the direction and command of Pedro De Alvarado, began attacking the Aztec people who were participating in the celebrations. 10,000 Aztecs were massacred. In retaliation, Aztec warriors attacked the city and revolted or rebelled against Montezuma. As Cortes's men tried to escape, they were confronted by the Tlaxcalan. A huge battle ensued and many Spanish and Tlaxcalan soldiers were killed by drowning in the canal waters of Mixcoatl Chialtitlan.

• **La Llorona**- *Information retrieved from:*

<http://www.read-legends-and-myths.com/la-llorona.html>

My description of what I found at the website: It is a legend well known throughout Mexico, Latin America, Puerto Rico, and in the U.S. There are Many versions of the story but the most common one is known to be about a beautiful woman named Maria who lived in a village. She was so beautiful that she almost thought that she was too good for most men, except for the one time when a handsome man on a horse (LOL), rode up in her village and their eyes met. It was love at first sight. They later married and had two children. Upon seeing her husband with another woman maria became enraged and jealous. She took her children to a river and drowned them, ultimately taking her own life as well. When she showed up to heavens doors, she was then questioned about her children. She lied and pretended not to know where they were. So she was denied entrance into heaven until she found them. The catch is that the children were already in heaven but she never found out. So she is stuck in purgatory looking for her children. People swear that they can hear her calling out to her children.

• **La Virgin de Guadalupe**- *Information retrieved from:*

<http://yeoldeconsciousnessshoppe.com/art261.html>

My description of what I found at the website: Tonantzin is known as the lady of Guadalupe or Coatlxopeuh (*Earth Mother*). A Mexica woman who appeared to Juan Diego in 1531, December 9-12 in Tepeyac near modern day Mexico City. She instructed Juan Diego to inform the bishop about her and to build a church on the hill of Tepeyac. He later returned saying that no one believed him. Tonantzin then instructed to fill his cape with roses and present them to the

bishop. When Diego opened up his cape, there was an image of the lady of Guadalupe on his clothes. The cape of Juan Diego can be found at the Catholic Basilica in Mexico City.

• **Aztec Omens-** *Information retrieved from:*

<http://theaztecaccount.blogspot.com/2009/06/omens-foretelling-arrival-of-spaniards.html>

My description of what I found at the website: The Omens are eight prophetic events that happened 10 years before the Spanish colonization. There are many interpretations of these events. The one I found depict the first event as being a fire in the sky perhaps, something similar to a comet or falling star. The second event or sighting was when the temple of Huitzilopochtli bursted into flames all by itself and could not be put out by water. The third event or omen, was temple of Xiuhtecuhtli was hit by lightning and the sun, but there was no thunder according to the witnesses. The fourth omen was the sign of streaming fire active throughout the sky while it was daylight. There were three sections flowing out (like a sprinkler), appearing to be coming out of the sun. The fifth event was when the high winds picked up the waves of the lake or river, destroying the houses. The sixth omen was when the people of the village could here La LLorona crying. The seventh event was when a couple of fishermen caught a strange looking black bird with a mirror on his crown that showed the horrific event of war. The eight omen was the appearance of two-headed monsters or men with one body that were roaming in the streets.

• **Dia de Los Muertos-** *Information retrieved from:*

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/dia-de-los-muertos/>

My description of what I found at the website: It is a holiday or celebration that takes place on the 1st of November. It is practiced by Mexicans in Mexico and in the U.S and Latin America.

The tradition typically dates back to Mexico honoring the dead. The celebrations are a combination of Aztec rituals and dances with catholicism practices. The families of loved ones who have passed bring food, drinks, flowers, candles, shrines, rosaries and more to honor the dead. Pretty much, it is a day or two to, for those still living, to spend time remembering those who have left us. It is also a celebration of their lives.

• **La Raza Cosmica-** *Information retrieved from:*

<http://latinousa.org/2014/04/25/latinos-cosmic-race/>

My description of what I found at the website: I learned that a Mexican philosopher named Jose Vasconcelos, predicted that one day an entire new race of people would emerge from the Americas. This new race which is mixed with european, african and asian roots, would eventually lead to the other races of people in the world. He explained in his essay, “La raza cosmica” that the mixing of races was actually an experiment being done in Latin America. This would result in a new civilization in the future and the richness of the cultural history would be embraced and celebrated as one human race. According to the Census: half of all Americans under the age of 5 are of mixed descent.

• **Mal Ojo or mal de ojo-** *Information retrieved from:*

<https://mom.me/lifestyle/6602-10-curious-customs-latina-moms/item/mal-de-ojo/>

My description of what I found at the website: It is a common custom in Latin America and Mexico and is called “evil eye” and considered to be a negative action. The evil eye from a person who is wealthy or in power; a powerful man for example, has the power to cause misery to another being who is not considered to be as strong such as the poor, the old, the very young, women or children. For instance, when a person looks at another person with spite or envy, the

look is considered to be like a curse. This curse can cause physical or emotional pain or injury or result in a bad luck making life very miserable for the victims. The article gives an example of mothers with their babies. If the baby has been looked badly upon by another, the baby must be taken to a healer who will perform a special ritual to rid the child of evil. It is also encouraged for the mothers to present their baby to anyone who will admire or love the baby.

• **Mestizos in Mexico-** *Information retrieved from:*

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/07/10/mestizo-and-mulatto-mixed-race-identities-unique-to-hispanics/>

My description of what I found at the website: The article explains that mestizos are people of mixed races from Latin America or Mexico. It usually refers to anyone with ancestries with European, African, or Asian ancestries. If we look back at the history of the Americas, during the colonization of Spanish settlers, there were “mixing of races”. Usually this meant that the white slave owners (*Spanish*), would rape the Indians and their children would come out with mixed blood and their physical features were unique. The same is for mulattos; where the mixing is with white and African blood. There is a huge population of mestizos in Mexico, central and South America.

• **What are “dichos?”-** *Information retrieved from:*

[:http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/424-mexico-s-popular-sayings-a-taste-for-dichos](http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/424-mexico-s-popular-sayings-a-taste-for-dichos)

My description of what I found at the website: Dichos are universal cultural truths, or sayings that contribute to what ties and binds us together in a culture. These saying consist of a few words with meaning behind them. The meaning can be symbolic in nature. They are also meant to teach us moral lessons or make us aware of our behaviors and actions, and understand the

consequences of those actions. They are easy to remember and likely to be passed down through the generations. Usually older people who have lived long enough to have learned through their mistakes are the ones to pass down these sayings to the youth, *(from my experience)*, however according to this article, parents are the folk who are most likely to use them at home.

- **Curandera/os-**

Information retrieved from:

<http://www.newstaco.com/2013/09/26/what-are-curanderos-in-hispanic-cultures/>

My description of what I found at the website: It is a holistic form of healing. This type of practice and healing uses natural medicine or herbs, prayer, rituals with song, etc. It is considered to be the mixing of catholicism practices with indigenous medicine. Curandera/o's means curers. It implies those who have the ability to cure someone of their illness or inner demons, etc. This type of medicine practice can be found in the southwestern portion of the U.S. A curandera/o focuses on the balance of the body, diet activity level and medications. Many people will go to these type of doctors because they do not approve or trust western medicine. Religion or spiritual beliefs also play a huge role in why some go to these types of healers.