

Title - The Legends of Guatemala: Miguel Ángel Asturias, discovering the impact of this literary history.

Program of Study – Spanish

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Abstract/Research Proposal

Miguel Ángel Asturias is known and celebrated worldwide for his vivid description of Mayan life and culture. In Guatemala, Latin America and beyond, moreover, his works have had a tremendous impact over how the world has come to view this important people group. This research study examines the literary history work of Miguel Ángel Asturias; the impression and significance that his book, “The Legends of Guatemala” has had over the history of Guatemala. This study will explain how these stories have been passed down from generation to generation which led to the creation of Asturias’ work, which then became the model for how these stories of history were told in Guatemala. Legends of Guatemala by Asturias is a good example of Literary History since the author grew up in Guatemala, where his mother told him the stories which he writes in his book. This research study will answer the following questions: How do these stories pertain to the religion and behaviors of the people in Guatemala? How do the myths and legends which pertain to “rebirth,” priest-tree, and el Sombrerón (child/demon) compare to what the Bible says? And what are the repercussions of making literature a piece of history? This book caused these famous stories to be spread even more, not only through Latin America, but throughout the US and English speakers, through the English translation by Kelly Washbourne.

There can be many consequences to making these stories history through the publication of Legends of Guatemala by Asturias. No longer are the stories based solely on the perspectives which were passed down orally from generation to generation; the stories are based on the perspective and the memory of Asturias and now people can read their children these stories through his work. Legends of Guatemala is a significant example of literary history, because of the memory of Asturias being written down, and it demonstrates the mix of Mayan and Catholic beliefs which the Guatemalan people are known for. In his colorful depictions of Mayan life and customs, Asturias provides a truly compelling vision of a culture with much to offer despite an overwhelming need for Christ's love.

Statement of Biblical Worldview

"The Legends of Guatemala" is a good example of how history has been passed down orally for hundreds of years, which is also how the majority of Biblical history has been recorded. It is of utmost importance that one review the sources of their information in research and from history, to be sure that it matches what the Bible says. In all research pursuits, including a research proposal of this nature, one should try to complete all aspects of the research in a Christian manner, giving respect to the authors of previous work by including proper citations. This will show others honesty, which in turn reveals the real purpose behind why we do anything in life: to bring glory to God. As Christians (those who have given their life to Jesus Christ through salvation), we must honor Christ in everything we do and bring others to God through our actions and words that we speak, which we will be rewarded for one day in heaven.