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Document analysis essay

“Popol Vuh” by Dennis Tedlock

History 1500

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Popol Vuh

The “Popol Vuh” is a book of how the Mayan’s believe the world was created. It tells stories of the ancient gods, ancestors, and astronomical events. It is not certain when the “Popol Vuh” was written. It may have been written in the early phase of the Mayan civilization in 1200 A.D. Likewise it is not certain who wrote it but it may have been many early Mayan writers. However the Mayan lords of Quiche found the “Popol Vuh” on a religious journey. The “Popol Vuh” is an important text of Mayan culture as it is one of the only remaining Mayan books that survived Spanish conquest and time its self. “Only four books are known to have survived to the present day, including the three that found their way to Madrid, Paris, and Dresden long ago.” As said in the book “Popol Vuh” by Dennis Tedlock.

The documents in the “Popol Vuh” talk about the Mayan creation of the earth and its inhabitants and the stories of their ancestors. For example the Mayan gods wanted to create people so they could worship and praise them. They start by creating land out of ocean and then they create all the trees and pants. Then they create the animals for the humans to eat. Then the Mayan gods try to create humans they fail at the first three tries. Then finally on the fourth try making people out of corn they were able to create humans. That could walk, talk, and worship

the gods and praise them. The document also talks about stories of people and their lives in which they collide with the gods, but it also talks much about how star constellations were created and how the moon and sun came about.

This document was written so the Mayan people could have access to knowledge of their gods, ancestors and the creation of the world. They could also use this knowledge to know astronomical events and the movement of planets and stars. By knowing how the stars worked they were able to know specific times and dates to worship the gods.

This document tells us some things about Mayan culture, and writing for instance. What they believed in like the gods and creatures and their symbolic meanings for example like the owl in which they were the messengers of the lords of the underworld, and how after the hero twins defeated the lords of the underworld they turned into the sun and moon. Many of their stories of people and animals have great meaning. This document also talks about cities and towns in which these events took place. The document also shows how the Mayans wrote, the Mayans use hieroglyphs. These hieroglyphs stood for many things and the Mayans use them in their writing in books and on ancient sites.

This document is an important one because it tells us about the Mayan world in their own words. It gives us an inside on how they viewed their world and the people in it. Also because this is one of the only remaining books of the Mayans it is important to try to understand it and it could tell us more about their civilization, before the Europeans arrived to their homeland. The authors of this book did a good job in describing the events in the documents and the importance of their writing. The Mayan civilization was a great one that contributed a lot to the world this document is important because it preserves Mayan culture and its history.

