



גוקומאץ

שבטי המאיה (מ-2000 לפני סה"נ ועד לימינו) - עמוד הבית 

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... נוצר אצל שבטי המאיה, "נחש הנוצות", הוא קצ'אלקואטל, כונה ביוקטאן בשם קיקילקאן (Cuculcan), שפירושו "נחש הנוצות", ובגואטמלה כונה **גוקומאץ** (Gucumatz) באותו מובן מילולי.

בעקבות תרבות המאיה | גילי חסקין - מדריך טיולים 

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לדוגמא, "נחש הנוצות", הוא קצ'אלקואטל [9] (Quetsalcoatl), כונה ביוקטאן בשם "קיקילקאן" (Cuculcan), ובגואטמלה כונה "**גוקומאץ**" (Gucumatz), שני שמות שהוראתם – "נחש ...

Q'uq'umatz

Contents

Articles

Q'uq'umatz	1
Feathered Serpent	7
Resplendent quetzal	10
K'iche' people	16

References

Article Sources and Contributors	19
Image Sources, Licenses and Contributors	20

Article Licenses

License	21
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Q'ujumatz

This article is about the K'iche' Mayan deity. For the K'iche' Mayan ruler of the same name, see K'iche' Kingdom of Q'umarkaj#Quq'kumatz and K'iq'ab (ca. 1400 – 1475).

Q'ujumatz (/qʔuː qʔuːˈmäts/) (alternatively **Qucumatz**, **Gukumatz**, **Gucumatz**, **Gugumatz**, **Kucumatz** etc.) was a deity of the Postclassic K'iche' Maya. Q'ujumatz was the feathered serpent god of the Popol Vuh who created humanity together with the god Tepeu. Q'ujumatz is considered to be the rough equivalent of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl,^[1] and also of Kukulcan of the Yucatec Maya tradition.^[2] It is likely that the feathered serpent deity was borrowed from one of these two peoples and blended with other deities to provide the god Q'ujumatz that the K'iche' worshipped.^[3] Q'ujumatz may have had his origin in the Valley of Mexico; some scholars have equated the deity with the Aztec deity Ehecatl-Quetzalcoatl, who was also a creator god.^[4] Q'ujumatz may originally have been the same god as Tohil, the K'iche' sun god who also had attributes of the feathered serpent,^[5] but they later diverged and each deity came to have a separate priesthood.^[6]



Ballcourt marker at Mixco Viejo, depicting Q'ujumatz carrying Tohil across the sky in his jaws

Q'ujumatz was one of the gods who created the world in the Popol Vuh, the K'iche' creation epic.^[7] Q'ujumatz, god of wind and rain, was closely associated with Tepeu, the god of lightning and fire.^[8] Both of these deities were considered to be the mythical ancestors of the K'iche' nobility by direct male line.^[9] Q'ujumatz carried the sun across the sky and down into the underworld and acted as a mediator between the various powers in the Maya cosmos.^{[10][11][12][13]} The deity was particularly associated with water, clouds, the wind and the sky.

Kotuja', the K'iche' king who founded the city of Q'umarkaj, bore the name of the deity as a title and was likely to have been a former priest of the god. The priests of Q'ujumatz at Q'umarkaj, the K'iche' capital, were drawn from the dominant Kaweq dynasty and acted as stewards in the city.

Etymology and symbolism

The name translates literally as "Quetzal Serpent" although it is often rendered less accurately as "Feathered Serpent".^[14] The name derives from the K'iche' word *q'uq'*, referring to the Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno*, a brightly coloured bird of the cloud forests of southern Mesoamerica. This is combined with the word *kumatz*, meaning "snake". The male Resplendent Quetzal boasts iridescent blue-green tail feathers measuring up to 1 metre (3.3 ft) long that were prized by the Maya elite. The blue-green feathers symbolised vegetation and the sky, both symbols of life for the ancient Maya, while the bright red feathers of the bird's chest symbolised fire. Together, this combination gave a profound religious symbolism to the bird. The snake was a Maya symbol of rebirth due to its habit of shedding its skin to reveal a fresher one underneath. Q'uk'umatz thus combined the celestial characteristics of the Quetzal with the serpentine underworld powers of the snake, giving him power over all levels of the Maya universe. These characteristics also indicated a sexual duality between his masculine feathered serpent aspect and his feminine association with water and wind. This duality enabled the god to serve as a mediator between the masculine sun god Tohil and the feminine moon goddess Awilix, a role that was symbolised with the Mesoamerican ballgame.^[15]

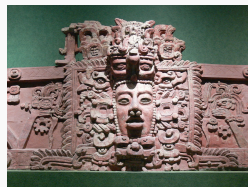


Q'uq', the Resplendent Quetzal, was strongly associated with Q'uk'umatz in K'iche' belief

In ancient Maya highland texts Q'uk'umatz is strongly associated with water, which in turn is associated with the underworld.^{[16][17]} The K'iche' are reported to have believed that Q'uk'umatz was a feathered serpent that moved in the water. In the *Annals of the Cakchiquels*, it is related that a group of highland Maya referred to themselves as the *Gucumatz* because their only salvation was said to be in the water.^[18] The Kaqchikel Maya were closely linked to the K'iche' and one of their ancestors, Gagavitz, was said to have thrown himself into Lake Atitlán and transformed himself into the deity, thus raising a storm upon the water and forming a whirlpool.^[19]

Among the K'iche' Q'uk'umatz not only appeared as a feathered serpent, he was also embodied as an eagle and a jaguar, he was also known to transform himself into a pool of blood.^[20] The deity was sometimes represented by a snail or conch shell and was associated with a flute made from bones. As well as being associated with water, Q'uk'umatz was also associated with clouds and the wind.^[21]

Q'uk'umatz, the sun and the ballgame



Maya civilization

- People
- Society
- Languages
- Writing
- Religion
- Mythology

•	Sacrifice
•	Cities
•	Architecture
•	Calendar
•	Stelae
•	Art
•	Textiles
•	Trade
•	Music
•	Dance
•	Medicine
•	Cuisine
History	
Preclassic Maya	
Classic Maya collapse	
Spanish conquest of Yucatán	
Spanish conquest of Guatemala	
Spanish conquest of Petén	
•	v
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•	e ^[22]

Q'ujumatz was not directly equivalent to the Mexican Quetzalcoatl, he combined his attributes with those of the Classic Period Chontal Maya creator god Itzamna and was a two headed serpentine sky monster that carried the sun across the sky. Sculptures of a human face emerging between the jaws of a serpent were common from the end of the Classic Period through to the Late Postclassic and may represent Q'ujumatz in the act of carrying Hunahpu, the youthful avatar of the sun god Tohil, across the sky. After midday, Q'ujumatz continued into the west and descended towards the underworld bearing an older sun.^[23] Such sculptures were used as markers for the Mesoamerican ballgame. Since Q'ujumatz acted as a mediator between Tohil and Awilix and their incarnations as the Maya Hero Twins Hunahpu and Ixbalanque, the positioning of such ballcourt markers on the east and west sides of north-south oriented ballcourts would represent Q'ujumatz carrying the sun to the zenith with the east marker carrying Hunahpu/Tohil in its jaws, while the west marker would represent the descent of the sun into the underworld and would be carrying Ixbalanque/Awilix in its jaws.

No ballgame markers are known from the heart of the K'iche' kingdom and investigators such as Fox consider it significant that these images of Q'ujumatz carrying the sun are found in the eastern periphery facing the underworld due to the use of the ballgame in mediating political conflict.^[24]

Modern belief

The various Feathered Serpent deities remained popular in Mesoamerican folk traditions after the Spanish Conquest but by the 20th century Q'ujumatz appeared only rarely among the K'iche'.^[25] A tradition was recorded by Juan de León that Q'ujumatz assisted the sun-god Tohil in his daily climb to the zenith.^[26] According to De León, who may have gathered the information from elders in Santa Cruz del Quiché, the feathered serpent gripped Tohil in his jaws to carry him safely up into the sky.^[27]

The Popol Vuh

In the beginning of the Popol Vuh, Q'uc'umatz is depicted as afloat in the primordial sea with Tepeu, wrapped in quetzal feathers.^[28] Nothing yet existed, only the sea at rest under the sky. Soon Q'uc'umatz and Tepeu discussed the creation of man and it was decided between them to raise the earth and create mankind. The gods spoke the word "*Earth*" and the earth was formed as if from a mist.^[29] They then called forth the mountains from the water and the mountains rose at their command. Forests of pine and cypress then sprung up among the newly formed mountains and valleys.^[30] Q'uc'umatz was pleased with their collaborative creation of the earth and thanked the other gods that were present. The gods created animals such as the deer, the birds, pumas, jaguars and different types of snakes.^[31] They instructed each animal where it should live. The gods then commanded that the animals should give them praise and worship them.^{[32][33]} However, the animals could not speak and simply squawked, chattered and roared in their own manner. Q'uc'umatz soon realized that their first attempt at the creation of beings was a failure as they could not give them praise and so they condemned the animals to live in the forests and ravines.^[34] Their animals were ordered to live in the wild and to let their flesh be eaten by the ones who will keep the days of the gods and show them praise.

They first formed men of mud, but in this form man could neither move nor speak and quickly dissolved into nothingness. Later, they created men of sculpted wood, which Huracan destroyed as the wooden manikins were imperfect, emotionless and showed no praise to the gods. The survivors were then transformed into monkeys, and sentenced to live in the wild. Q'uc'umatz and Tepeu were finally successful in their creation by constructing men out of maize.^[35] Here the first men were formed: B'alam Agab, B'alam Quitzé, Iqi B'alam, Mahucatah. Their sight was far and they understood all.

The Popol Vuh also mentions a historic ruler of the K'iche' who bore the name or title of the deity, probably because he drew some of his power from the god.^[36] This title of "Feathered Serpent", was an important title used for historical figures in other parts of Mesoamerica,^[37] the personal name of this king was likely to have been Kotuja'.^[38] This individual was likely to have been an *Aj Q'uc'umatz*, or priest of Q'uc'umatz, before he became the *Aj pop* (king).^[39] This king was said to have refounded the K'iche' capital at Q'umarkaj.

Temple and priesthood at Q'umarkaj

In the K'iche' capital city Q'umarkaj the temple of Q'uc'umatz consisted of a circular temple in honour of the deity together with a palace in honour of the Kawek lineage, the ruling dynasty of the city.^[40] The only trace of the temple now is a circular impression in the surface of the city's main plaza. The temple was located directly between the temples to the important K'iche' deities Tohil and Awilix, slightly north of the central axis of the temple of Tohil and slightly south of the axis of the temple of Awilix, replicating the role of Q'uc'umatz as mediator between the two deities.^[41] From the traces left in the plaza it is evident that the temple consisted of a circular wall measuring 6 metres (20 ft) across, running around a circular platform, with a 1-metre (3.3 ft) wide circular passage between the two. The whole structure probably once supported a roof and there were small stone platforms on the east and west sides of the temple, each about 1 metre (3.3 ft) wide. The temple of Q'uc'umatz must have been completely dismantled very soon after the Spanish Conquest since it is not mentioned by any of the Colonial era visitors, and early drawings of the site show only vegetation where the temple once stood. The tradition of circular temples dedicated to the Feathered Serpent deity was an ancient one in the Mesoamerican cultural region.



The ruins of Q'umarkaj. The temple of Q'uc'umatz once stood between the Temple of Tohil (tower at middle left) and the Temple of Awilix (at back). The ballcourt is in the foreground.

The priests of Q'ujumatz were drawn from an important lineage among the ruling Kaweq dynasty and this was likely to have been a source of power and prestige for the Kaweq.^[42] The priests were known as *Aj Q'ujumatz*, meaning "he of Q'ujumatz".^[43] The priests of Q'ujumatz and of Tepeu, his partner in the K'iche' creation myth (the *Aj Q'ujumatz* and the *Tepew Yaki*), also served as stewards in Q'umarkaj and were responsible for receiving and guarding any tribute payments and plunder that were returned to the city.^[44] Although K'iche' priests were generally of lower rank than secular officials, the priests of the Kaweq lineages were an exception, and this included the priests of Q'ujumatz, Tepeu and Tohil.^[45]

Notes

- [1] Christenson 2003, 2007, p.53.
- [2] Recinos 1954, pp.45-36.
- [3] Read & González 2000, p.191.
- [4] Carmack 2001a, p.55.
- [5] Fox 1987, 2008, p.60.
- [6] Orellana 1981, p.159.
- [7] McCallister 2008, pp.1-2.
- [8] Carmack 2001a, p.279.
- [9] Carmack 2001b, p.76.
- [10] Fox 1987, 2008, p. 249.
- [11] Fox 1987, 2008, p.121.
- [12] Fox 1991, pp. 220-221.
- [13] Fox 1991, p. 235.
- [14] Christenson 2003, 2007, p.52.
- [15] Fox 1991, p.221.
- [16] Christenson 2003, 2007, p.59.n54.
- [17] Recinos 1998, p.51.n62.
- [18] Recinos 1998, p.51.
- [19] Recinos 1998, p.64.
- [20] Read & González 2000, p.190.
- [21] Carmack 2001a, p.260.
- [22] http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Template:Maya_civilization&action=edit
- [23] Fox 1991, p.235.
- [24] Fox 1987, 2008, p.248. Fox 1991, pp.234-235.
- [25] Read & González 2000, p.182.
- [26] Carmack 2001a, p.364.
- [27] Carmack 2001a, p.365.
- [28] Luhrmann 1984, p.336.
- [29] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.61.
- [30] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.62.
- [31] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.63.
- [32] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.64.
- [33] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.65.
- [34] Recinos 1954, p.41.
- [35] Miller & Taube 1993, 2003, p.69.
- [36] Carmack 2001b, p.181.
- [37] Carmack 2001b, p.178.
- [38] Carmack 2001b, p.183.
- [39] Carmack 2001b, pp.181, 183.
- [40] Coe 1999, p.190. Kelly 1996, p.200.
- [41] Carmack 2001a, p. 364.
- [42] Carmack 2001a, p.366.
- [43] Christenson, Allen J. 2003, 2007 , p.254.n742.
- [44] Carmack 2001a, pp.208, 311.
- [45] Carmack 2001a, p.208.

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Feathered Serpent

For other uses, see Feathered Serpent (disambiguation).



Aztec era stone sculptures of feathered serpents on display at the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City.



Feathered Serpent heads cover the Temple of the Feathered Serpent in Teotihuacan.



A Feathered Serpent from deep in the Juxtlahuaca cave. Stylistically tied to the Olmec, this red Feathered Serpent has a crest of now-faded green feathers.

Courtesy of Matt Lachniet, used with permission.



Wikimedia Commons has media related to *Plumed serpent*.

The **Feathered Serpent** was a prominent supernatural entity or deity, found in many Mesoamerican religions. It was called Quetzalcoatl among the Aztecs, Kukulcan among the Yucatec Maya, and Q'uq'umatz and Tohil among the K'iche' Maya. The double symbolism used in its name is considered allegoric to the dual nature of the deity, where being feathered represents its divine nature or ability to fly to reach the skies and being a serpent represents its human nature or ability to creep on the ground among other animals of the Earth, a dualism very common in Mesoamerican deities.^[1]

The earliest representations of feathered serpents appear in the Olmec culture (circa 1400–400 BCE).^[2] Most surviving representations in Olmec art, such as Monument 19 at La Venta and a painting in the Juxtlahuaca cave (see below), show it as a crested rattlesnake, sometimes with feathers covering the body, and often in close proximity to humans.^[3] It is believed that Olmec supernatural entities such as the feathered serpent were the forerunners of many later Mesoamerican deities,^[4] although experts disagree on the feathered serpent's importance to the Olmec.^[5]

The pantheon of the people of Teotihuacan (200 BCE – 700 CE) also featured a feathered serpent, shown most prominently on the Temple of the Feathered Serpent (dated 150–200 CE).^[6] Several feathered serpent representations appear on the building, including full-body profiles and feathered serpent heads.

Buildings in Tula, the capital of the later Toltecs (950–1150 CE), also featured profiles of feathered serpents.^[7]

The Aztec feathered serpent god Quetzalcoatl is known from several Aztec codices such as the Florentine codex, as well as from the records of the Spanish conquistadors. Quetzalcoatl was a bringer of knowledge, the inventor of books, and associated with the planet Venus.

The corresponding Mayan god Kukulcan was rare in the Classic era Maya civilization.^[8] However, in the *Popol Vuh*, the K'iche' feathered serpent god Tepeu Q'uq'umatz is the creator of the cosmos.^[9]

Along with the feathered serpent deity, several other serpent gods existed in the pantheon of Mesoamerican gods with similar traits.

Notes

[1] The Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Culture

[2] Pool, p. 1. Other authors give a slightly different dates.

[3] Joralemon, p. 58.

[4] Covarrubias, p. 62. Joralemon, p. 58.

[5] Diehl, p. 104 says that "its rarity suggests that it was a minor member of the Olmec pantheon". Joralemon (1996) however, states that "the feathered serpent is a divinity of considerable importance in Olmec civilization", p. 58.

[6] Castro.

[7] Coe, p. 133.

[8] Miller & Taube, p. 150.

[9] Christenson (2007)

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Resplendent quetzal

This article is about the bird. For the short story, see The Resplendent Quetzal.

Resplendent quetzal

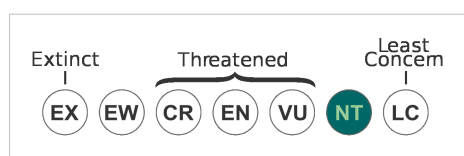


A male



Female at nest hole


Conservation status



Near Threatened (IUCN 3.1)

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata

Class:	Aves
Order:	Trogoniformes
Family:	Trogonidae
Genus:	<i>Pharomachrus</i>
Species:	<i>P. mocinno</i>
Binomial name	
<i>Pharomachrus mocinno</i> La Llave, 1832	
Subspecies	
<i>P. m. costaricensis</i> <i>P. m. mocinno</i>	
	
Range of <i>P. mocinno</i>	

The **resplendent quetzal** (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) is a bird in the trogon family. It is found from southern Mexico to western Panama (unlike the other quetzals of the genus *Pharomachrus*, which are found in South America and eastern Panama). It is well known for its colorful plumage. There are two subspecies, *P. m. mocinno* and *P. m. costaricensis*.

This quetzal plays an important role in Mesoamerican mythologies. The resplendent quetzal is Guatemala's national bird, and an image of it is on the flag and coat of arms of Guatemala. It is also the name of the local currency (abbreviation GTQ).

Taxonomy

The resplendent quetzal was first described by Mexican naturalist Pablo de La Llave in 1832. It is one of five species of the genus *Pharomachrus* known as quetzals. The term "quetzal" was originally used for just this species, but is now applied to all members of the genera *Pharomachrus* and *Euptilotis*.

Two subspecies are recognised, *P. m. mocinno* and *P. m. costaricensis*. The epithet *mocinno* is Llave's Latinization of the name of the biologist J. M. Mociño, a mentor of his. (It is sometimes spelled *mocino*, but "ñ" was formerly spelled "nn" in Spanish, so the spelling with "nn" is justified and in any case now official.)

The word "quetzal" came from Nahuatl (Aztec), where *quetzalli* (from the root *quetz* = "stand") meant "tall upstanding plume" and then "quetzal tail feather"; from that Nahuatl *quetzalotōtl* means "quetzal-feather bird" and thus "quetzal".

Description

This species is 36–40 cm (14–16 in) long, plus up to 65 cm (26 in) of tail streamer for the male, and weighs about 210 g (7.4 oz). It is the largest representative of the trogon order. The subspecies *costaricensis* is slightly smaller than the nominate race and has shorter narrower tail plumes.

Resplendent quetzals have a green body (showing iridescence from green-gold to blue-violet) and red breast. Their green upper tail coverts hide their tails and in breeding males are particularly splendid, being longer than the rest of the body. The primary wing coverts are also unusually long and give a fringed appearance. The male has a helmet-like crest. The bill, which is partly covered by green filamentous feathers, is yellow in mature males and black in females.

The skin of the quetzal is very thin and easily torn, so it has evolved thick plumage to protect its skin. ^{Wikipedia:Citation needed} Like other members of the trogon family, it has large eyes that adapt easily to the dim light of its forest home. ^{Wikipedia:Citation needed}

The "song" is a treble syllable described as *kyow* or like "a whimpering pup", often in pairs, which may be repeated monotonously. Resplendent quetzals have other unmusical calls as well.

Distribution and habitat

Their habitat is montane cloud forest from Southern Mexico to western Panama.

Behavior

Resplendent quetzals are weak fliers. Their known predators include the ornate hawk-eagle and owls as adults, emerald toucanets, brown jays, long-tailed weasels, squirrels, and the kinkajou as nestlings or eggs.

Feeding



A male

Resplendent quetzals are considered specialized fruit-eaters, although they mix their diet with insects (notably wasps, ants, and larvae), frogs and lizards. Particularly important are wild avocados and other fruit of the laurel family, which the birds swallow whole before regurgitating the pits, which helps to disperse these trees.

Breeding

Resplendent quetzals usually live alone when not breeding. They are monogamous territorial breeders, with the territory size being measured in Guatemala as 6–10 ha (15–25 acres). They are also seasonal breeders, with the breeding season being March to April in Mexico, May to June in El Salvador and March to May in Guatemala. When breeding, females lay two pale blue eggs in a nest placed in a hole which they carve in a rotten tree. A tree in the required stage of decomposition is susceptible to weather damage, and the availability of suitable trees may limit the resplendent quetzal population.

Both parents take turns at incubating, with their long tail-covert feathers folded forwards over the back and out of the hole, where they tend to look like a bunch of fern growing out of the hole. The incubation period lasts about 18 days, during which the male generally incubates the eggs during the day while the female incubates them at night. When the eggs hatch, both parents take care of the young, feeding them fruit, berries, insects, lizards, and small frogs. However, the female often neglects and even abandons the young near the end of the rearing period, leaving it up to the male to continue caring for the offspring until they are ready to survive on their own.



Male leaving nest hole

Status and conservation

The resplendent quetzal is classified as near threatened on the IUCN Red List due to habitat loss. However, it does occur in several protected areas throughout its range and is a sought after species for bird watchers and eco-tourists.

Relationship with humans

Myth and legend

The resplendent quetzal was considered divine, associated with the "snake god", Quetzalcoatl by Pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilizations. Its iridescent green tail feathers, symbols for spring plant growth, were venerated by the ancient Aztecs and Maya, who viewed the quetzal as the "god of the air" and as a symbol of goodness and light. Mesoamerican rulers and some nobility of other ranks wore headdresses made from quetzal feathers, symbolically connecting them to Quetzalcoatl. Since it was a crime to kill a quetzal, the bird was simply captured, its long tail feathers plucked, and was set free. Quetzalcoatl was the creator god and god of wind, often depicted with grey hair. In several Mesoamerican languages, the term for *quetzal* can also mean *precious*, *sacred*, or *erected*.

Until recently, it was thought that the resplendent quetzal could not be bred or held for any long time in captivity, and indeed it was noted for usually killing itself soon after being captured or caged. Wikipedia:Citation needed For this reason it is a traditional symbol of liberty. However, the Miguel Álvarez del Toro Zoo in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, Mexico has kept this species since 1992, and in 2004 breeding in captivity was announced. A chick hatched and reached the age of six weeks at the time of the report.

The bird is of great relevance to Guatemalan culture, being a character in the widely popular legend of the local hero Tecún Umán, a prince and warrior of the Quiché (K'iche') Maya during the latter stages of the Spanish conquest of the region. This quetzal was his *nahual* (spirit guide). The Quiché repelled several attacks from the Spanish army, even though outmatched in weaponry (guns, armor and cavalry against spears and arrows).

Legend has it that on the day the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado fought against Tecún Umán, there was a quetzal flying overhead. On the first strike Tecún Umán, on foot, managed to disable Pedro de Alvarado's horse. Alvarado was then given another horse and on the second strike ran through Tecún Umán's chest with a spear. The quetzal flew down and landed on Tecún Umán, dipping its chest in the warrior prince's blood. It is there that the bird acquired its distinctive red chest feathers.

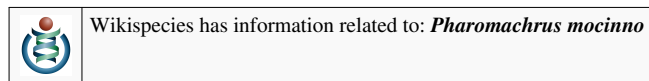
It is debatable whether these events happened, but the Maya fought fiercely for their land and freedom during the conquest. One Mayan legend claims that the quetzal used to sing beautifully before the Spanish conquest, but has been silent ever since; it will sing once again only when the land is truly free.

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External links



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- Resplendent quetzal videos, photos, and sounds (<http://ibc.lynxeds.com/species/resplendent-quetzal-pharomachrus-mocinno>) at the Internet Bird Collection
- Resplendent quetzal photo gallery (<http://vireo.acnatsci.org/search.html?Form=Search&SEARCHBY=Common&KEYWORDS=Resplendent+Quetzal&showwhat=images&AGE=All&SEX=All&ACT=All&Search=Search&VIEW=All&ORIENTATION=All&RESULTS=24>) at VIREO (Drexel University)

K'iche' people

K'iche' (Quiché)

Total population
1,270,953 ^[1]
Regions with significant populations
Languages
K'iche', Spanish
Religion
Catholic, Evangelicalist, Maya religion
Related ethnic groups
Kaqchikel, Tzutujil, Uspantek, Sakapultek

*This page is about the Native American people; for other uses see *Quiché* (disambiguation).*

K'iche' (pronounced [k'i 'tʃeʔ]) (previous Spanish spelling: **Quiché**) are a Native American people, one of the Maya ethnic groups. Their indigenous language, the K'iche' language, is a Mesoamerican language of the Mayan language family. The highland K'iche' states in the pre-Columbian era are associated with the ancient Maya civilization, and reached the peak of their power and influence during the postclassic period.

The meaning of the word "k'iche'" is "many trees." The word is broken into two parts, "k'i", meaning "many" and "che", meaning "tree." The Nahuatl translation is Cuauhtēmallān which gave the name to the modern Nation of Guatemala. El Quiché is also the name of a department of modern Guatemala.

Rigoberta Menchú, an activist for indigenous rights who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, is perhaps the best-known K'iche'.

People

The large majority of K'iche' people live in the highlands of Guatemala, notably in the departments of El Quiché, Totonicapán and Quetzaltenango. With more than half the K'iche' population, El Quiché forms the heartland of the K'iche' people. In pre-Columbian times, the K'iche' settlements and influence reached beyond the highlands, including the valley of Antigua and coastal areas in Escuintla.

Most K'iche' speak their native language and have at least a working knowledge of Spanish, with the exception of some remote and isolated rural communities. Maya languages closely related to K'iche' are Uspantek, Sakapultek, Kaqchikel and Tzutujil.



Market day in the K'iche' town of Chichicastenango

History

Main article: K'iche' Kingdom of Q'umarkaj

See also: Spanish conquest of Guatemala

In pre-Columbian times, the K'iche' Kingdom of Q'umarkaj was one of the most powerful states in the region. *K'iche'* was an independent state that existed after the decline of the Maya Civilization with the Classic collapse. Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Dates and numbers#Chronological items K'iche' lay in a highland mountain valley of Guatemala, and during this time they were also found in parts of El Salvador. The Spanish conquerors described towns such as Q'umarkaj (Utatlán), the capital of K'iche'. They bordered the Kaqchikel.

The K'iche' were conquered by the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1524. Their last military commander, Tecún Umán, led the K'iche' armies against the combined forces of Pedro de Alvarado and their Kaqchikel allies, in an epic battle in the valley of Xelajú (Quetzaltenango). The K'iche' armies were defeated, and close to 10,000 K'iche' died, including Tecún Umán, who has since lived on as a legendary figure in the K'iche' oral tradition. After the battle, the K'iche' surrendered and invited Alvarado to their capital, Q'umarkaj. However, Alvarado suspected an ambush and had the city burned. The ruins of the city can still be seen, just a short distance from Santa Cruz del Quiché.

One of the most significant surviving Mesoamerican literary documents and primary sources of knowledge about Maya societal traditions, beliefs and mythological accounts is a product of the 16th century K'iche' people. This document, known as the *Popol Vuh* ("Pop wuj" in proper K'iche' - "the book of events") and originally written around the 1550s, contains a compilation of mythological and ethno-historical narratives known to these people at that time, which were drawn from earlier pre-Columbian sources (now lost) and also oral traditional storytelling. This narrative includes a telling of their version of the creation myth, relating how world and humans were created by the gods, the story of the divine brothers, and the history of the K'iche' from their migration into their homeland up to the Spanish conquest.

Notes

- [1] According to the official 2002 census: The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) mentions a number close to 2 million K'iche's (http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=gt)

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External links

- K'iche' - an introduction (<http://en.citizendium.org/wiki/K'iche'>) - article at *Citizendium*
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K'iche' language

K'iche'	
	Quiché
	<i>Qatzijob'al</i>
Pronunciation	[k'i'tʃeʔ]
Native to	Guatemala
Region	Central highlands
Ethnicity	K'iche'
Native speakers	unknown (undated figure of 2.3 million) ^[1]
Language family	Mayan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern (Quichean–Mamean) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Quichean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quichean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiché–Achi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K'iche'
Early forms	Classical K'iche' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K'iche'
Official status	
Recognised minority language in	Guatemala
Regulated by	Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala (ALMG)
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	quc
Glottolog	kich1262 ^{[2][3]}

K'iche' or **Quiché** /ki:'tʃeɪ^[4] (K'iche' [k'i'tʃeʔ], also *Qatzijob'al* "our language" to its speakers) is a Mayan language of Guatemala, spoken by the K'iche' people of the central highlands. With over a million speakers (some 7% of Guatemala's population), K'iche' is the second-most widely spoken language in the country after Spanish. Most speakers of K'iche' languages also have at least a working knowledge of Spanish.

The Central dialect is the most commonly used in the media and education. The literacy rate is low, but K'iche' is increasingly taught in schools and used on radio. The most famous work in the Classical K'iche' language is the *Popol Vuh* (*Popol Wu'uj* in modern spelling).

Dialects

Kaufman (1970) divides the K'iche' complex into the following five dialects, with the representative municipalities given as well (quoted in Par Sapón 2000:17).

East	Central
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joyabaj • Zacualpa • Cubulco • Rabinal • San Miguel Chicaj 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa María Chiquimula • San Antonio Ilotenango • Santa Cruz del Quiché • Chichicastenango
West	North
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nahualá • Santa Clara La Laguna • Santa Lucía Utatlán • Aldea Argueta, Sololá • Cantel • Zunil • San José Chiquilajá, Quetzaltenango • Totoncapán • Momostenango 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cunén
	South
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Samayac

The Nahualá dialect of K'iche' shows some differences from other K'iche' lects: Nahualá preserves an ancient Proto-Mayan distinction between five long vowels (aa, ee, ii, oo, uu) and five short vowels (a, e, i, o, u). It is for this conservative linguistic feature that Guatemalan and foreign linguists have actively sought to have the language called "K'ichee'," rather than **K'iche'** or Quiché.

Phonology

Vowels

K'iche' dialects differ in their vowel systems. Historically, K'iche' had a ten-vowel system: five short and five long. Some dialects (for instance, Nahualá and Totoncapán) retain the ten-vowel system. Others (for instance, Cantel) have reduced it to a six-vowel system with no length distinctions: short /a/ has become /ə/ in these dialects, and the other short vowels have merged with their long counterparts. Different conventions for spelling the vowels have been proposed, including by the Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín, the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala. The table below shows the two vowel systems, and several of the spelling systems that have been proposed.

Phonemes		Spelling		
Ten-vowel	Six-vowel	PLFM	SIL	ALMG
/a/	/ə/	a	ä	a
/a:/	/a/	aa	a	
/e/	/e/	e	ë	e
/e:/		ee	e	
/i/	/i/	i	ï	i
/i:/		ii	i	
/o:/	/o/	o	ö	o
/o/		oo	o	

/u:/	/u/	u	ü	u
/u/		uu	u	

Vowels typically undergo syncope in penultimate syllables, allowing for a wide array of complex onsets. Diphthongs are found in recent loanwords.

Consonants

K'iche' has both pulmonic stops and affricates, **p** /p/, **t** /t/, **tz** /ts/, **ch** /tʃ/, **k** /k/, and **q** /q/, and glottalized counterparts **b'** /bʰ/, **t'** /tʰ/, **tz'** /tsʰ/, **ch'** /tʃʰ/, **k'** /kʰ/, and **q'** /qʰ/. The glottalized /b/ is a weak implosive, while the other glottalized consonants are ejectives. The pulmonic stops and affricates are typically aspirated.

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Nasals	m [m]	n [n]						
Glottalized plosive	b' [bʰ]	t' [tʰ]				k' [kʰ]	q' [qʰ]	
Aspirated plosive	p [pʰ]	t [tʰ]				k [kʰ]	q [qʰ]	' [ʔ]
Glottalized affricate		tz' [tsʰ]	ch' [tʃʰ]					
Aspirated affricate		tz [tsʰ]	ch [tʃʰ]					
Fricative		s [s]	x [ʃ]				j [ç]	h [h]
Approximant	w [ʋ]	l [l]		r [ɻ]	y [j]			

In West Quiche, the approximants **l** /l/, **r** /ɻ/, **y** /j/, and **w** /w/ devoice and fricate to [ɸ], [ɬ], [ç], and [ɰ] word-finally and often before voiceless consonants.

Syllabic structure

Complex onsets are very common in K'iche', partially due to the active process of penultimate syncope. Complex codas are rare, except when the first member of the complex coda is a phonemic glottal stop, written with an apostrophe. The sonorants /m, n, l, r/ may be syllabic.

Orthography

Historically, different orthographies have been used to transliterate the K'iche' languages. The classic orthography of Father Ximénez who wrote down the Popol Vuh is based on the Spanish orthography and has been replaced by a new standardized orthography defined by the ALMG (Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala). Ethnohistorian and Mayanist Dennis Tedlock uses his own transliteration system which is completely different from any of the established orthographies, but this system will not be given here.

The first line of Popol Wuj in different orthographies:	
Ximénez's classical orthography	<i>Are v xe oher tzih varal Quiche ubí.</i>
ALMG orthography	<i>Are' uxe' ojer tzij waral K'iche' ub'í'.</i>
(Ximénez's Spanish translation)	<i>Este es el principio de las Antiguas historias aquí en el Quiché.</i>
(Tedlock's English translation)	"This is the beginning of the ancient word, here in the place called Quiché."

Morphology

Like other Mayan languages, K'iche' uses two sets of agreement markers — known to Mayanists as "Set A" and "Set B" markers — which can appear on both nouns and verbs. "Set A" markers are used on nouns to mark possessor agreement, and on verbs to agree with the transitive subject (ergative case). "Set B" markers are used on verbs to agree with the transitive object or the intransitive subject (absolutive case).

Set A markers

	Before a consonant	Before a vowel
First person singular	nu- or in-	w- or inw-
Second person singular	a-	aw-
Third person singular	u-	r-
First person plural	qa-	q-
Second person plural	i-	iw-
Third person plural	ki-	k-

Set B markers

First person singular	in-
Second person singular	at-
Third person singular	Ø-
First person plural	oj- (uj- in some varieties)
Second person plural	ix-
Third person plural	e- (eb'- in some varieties)

Nouns

Nouns are not inflected for case. Their role in the sentence is indicated by word order, and by agreement marking on the grammatical head which they depend on.

Only a few nouns — most of them referring to humans — are inflected for number. On nouns which do show number, the most common plural suffixes are **ab'** and **ib'**: e.g. **ixoq** "woman", **ixoq-ib'** "women"; **ak'al** "child", **ak'al-ab'** "children."

A few common nouns have irregular plurals: **achi** "man", **achi-jab'** "men"; **ali** "girl", **ali-tomab'** "girls."

Nouns agree with their possessors, using the Set A agreement markers: **nu-wuj** "my book," **a-wuj** "your book," **u-wuj** "his book," etc.

Nouns may be used as predicates. When they are, they agree with their subject using the Set B agreement markers: **in achi** "I am a man," **at achi** "you are a man," **achi** "he is a man," etc.

Pronouns

K'iche' distinguishes six pronouns, classified by person and number. Gender and case are not marked on pronouns. Pronouns are often omitted, as subject and object agreement are obligatorily marked on the verb.

Subject and object pronouns

	In orthography	In IPA
First person singular	in	/in/
Second person singular	at	/at/
Third person singular	are'	/areʔ/
First person plural	uj	/uɣ/
Second person plural	ix	/iʃ/
Third person plural	iyare'	/ijareʔ/

Verbs

Verbs are highly morphologically complex, and can take numerous prefixes and suffixes serving both inflectional and derivational purposes.

The table below shows the inflectional template of a K'iche' verb. Agreement follows an ergative/absolutive pattern. Subjects of transitive verbs are indexed using Set A markers. Intransitive subjects and transitive objects are indexed using Set B markers. Aspect and mood are also indicated, as is movement: the prefix **ul-** in the movement slot indicates movement towards the speaker, while the prefix **e-** (or **b'e-** in some varieties) indicates movement away.

Verb inflection

Aspect/mood	Set B (absolutive)	Movement	Set A (ergative)	Stem	Status suffix	
k-	at-			b'in	-ik	katb'inik "You walk."
x-	at-		inw-	il	-o	xatinwilo "I saw you."
ch-	Ø-		a-	k'am	-a'	chak'ama' "Carry it!"
k-	Ø-	ul-		wa'	-oq	kulwa'oq "S/he comes and eats."

The last morpheme on a verb, the so-called "status suffix," is a portmanteau morph whose form determined by a rather complicated set of rules. Relevant factors include:

- whether the verb is transitive or intransitive
- whether the verb's mood is indicative or imperative
- whether or not the verb contains a movement marker
- whether or not the verb falls at the end of an intonational phrase

Voice and derivation

The examples above involve verbs with simple stems. Verb stems may also be morphologically complex. Complex stems may involve voice suffixes

- Causative: **-isa** (**-kam-** "die," **-kam-isa-** "kill (someone)")
- Passive: **-x** (**-kuna-** "cure (someone)," **-kuna-x-** "be cured")
- Completive passive: **-taj** (**-kuna-** "cure (someone)," **-kuna-taj-** "be completely cured; recover")
- Antipassive: **-n**, **-on** or **-un** (**-mes-** "sweep (something) clean," **-mes-on-** "sweep up")

or derivational suffixes, many of which form verb stems from other parts of speech. For instance, the versive suffix **-ir** or **-ar** forms verb stems from adjectives: **utz** "good," **-utz-ir-** "get good"; **nim** "big," **-nim-ar-** "get big." Multiple suffixes can appear within a single stem: **-nim-ar-** "get big," **-nim-ar-isa-** "enlarge (something)," **-nim-ar-isa-x-** "be enlarged."

Syntax

As with all Mayan languages, K'iche' has an ergative pattern of verb agreement, and often uses verb-object-subject (VOS) word order. Most modern speakers use SOV, SVO, and VSO word orders interchangeably. Language purists have tried to preserve the traditional verb-initial word order, while influence from Spanish (an SVO language) promotes a subject-initial order.

Notes

- [1] K'iche' (<http://www.ethnologue.com/language/quc>) at *Ethnologue* (17th ed., 2013)
- [2] <http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kich1262>
- [3] Nordhoff, Sebastian; Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2013). "K'iche'" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/kich1262>). *Glottolog 2.2* (<http://glottolog.org/>). Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.
- [4] Laurie Bauer, 2007, *The Linguistics Student's Handbook*, Edinburgh

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- Tedlock, Dennis. 1996. *Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of the Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life and the Glories of Gods and Kings*. Touchstone Books. ISBN 0-684-81845-0.

External links

- A K'iche'-English Dictionary (http://www.famsi.org/mayawriting/dictionary/christenson/quidic_complete.pdf)
 - A reversal of Christenson's K'iche'-English Dictionary into an English-K'iche' Dictionary (<http://www.taterenner.com/engkiche.pdf>)
 - Decree 19-2003 of Guatemala (<http://alertanet.org/guate-idiomas.htm>)
 - Brief K'iche' tutorial in English and Spanish (http://www.mission.net/guatemala/quetzaltenango/page.php?lang=eng&pg_id=1894)
 - Some basics of Quiché on Spanish-language Wikibooks (in Spanish) (<http://es.wikibooks.org/wiki/Quichées.wikibooks|Quiché>)
 - Einführung in das kolonialzeitliche K'iche' (Quiché) (http://home.snafu.de/duerr/PDF_Doku/Kichekurs.pdf) by Michael Dürr - an introduction to Classical K'iche', in German
 - Morphologie, Syntax und Textstrukturen des Maya-Quiche des Popol Vuh (http://home.snafu.de/duerr/PDF_Doku/Diss_Duerr.pdf) by Michael Dürr - a description of the grammar of the Classical K'iche' of Popol Vuh, in German
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