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## Kaqchikel Chronicles

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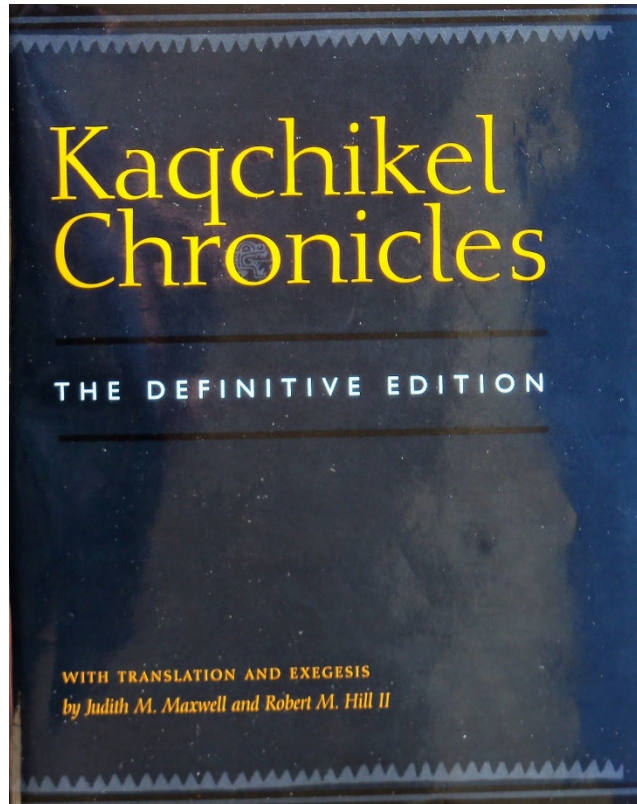
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# Kaqchikel Chronicles

Kirk Magleby

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Kaqchikel Chronicles Published by UT Austin

[\*Kaqchikel Chronicles: The Definitive Edition\*](#), with translation and exegesis by Judith M. Maxwell and Robert M. Hill II (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006) is a 771 page (Part 1 Introduction and Linguistic Commentary 80 pages, Part 2 The Chronicles 691 pages) book of mytho-historical narratives from highland Guatemala. The largest text in the collection, the Xajil Chronicle aka Anales de los Xahil, was written in Kaqchikel, a Mayan dialect, using Latin characters by Francisco Hernandez Arana Xajila in 1571, He was copying from an earlier indigenous and probably pictorial source no longer extant. Adrian Recinos published a translation called *Annals of the Cakchiquels* in Spanish (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1950) and English (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953) bundled with the K'iche' *Title of the Lords of Totonicapan*. In 1992 native Kaqchikel linguists, U.S. Kaqchikel linguists and anthropologists from several countries

collaborated at a University of Texas Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop to re-translate a portion of the text. The landmark 2006 publication eventually resulted from their efforts.

This article will explore many ways the Kaqchikel Chronicles correspond with the Book of Mormon, aka Mormon's Codex: An Ancient American Book (John L. Sorenson's apt terminology).

1. The Kaqchikel Chronicles were originally in Kaqchikel, a post-classic Mesoamerican language, recorded in Latin characters, then translated by scholars into various European languages beginning in 1855 (part 1, page 23). The Book of Mormon was originally in an unknown [Mormon 9:34](#) pre-classic Mesoamerican language with Hebrew roots [Mormon 9:33](#). For a known Mesoamerican language with some demonstrated Hebrew roots, see the blog article "[Uto-Aztecan](#)." The Book of Mormon was recorded in reformed Egyptian characters [Mormon 9:32](#). For a powerful demonstration of significant Egyptian influence on the Olmec, read Stephen C. Compton's book *Exodus Lost* described in a [previous blog article](#). The Book of Mormon was translated with divine aid into Early Modern English (see the blog article "[Early Modern English](#)") by unlettered 24-year-old Joseph Smith Jr. and published in 1830. It has since been translated in whole or in part into 113 languages, one of which is Kaqchikel.

2. The precontact Kaqchikel were divided into two groups, a western polity centered on Iximche just south of modern Tecpan, Chimaltenango, Guatemala and an eastern polity centered on Mixco Viejo, Chimaltenango, about 31 kilometers NW of modern Guatemala City. Both Iximche and Mixco Viejo are in what we consider to be the greater land of Nephi in the Book of Mormon's land southward, although neither site existed in Nephite times. The principal settlement in the greater land of Nephi we believe was Kaminaljuyu, now part of urban Guatemala City. Iximche is 50 air kilometers WNW of Kaminaljuyu. Anthropologists believe Mayan or proto Mayan speakers have been in this area since at least early classic times ca. AD 300 and probably much earlier.

3. The documents that make up the chronicles are clearly lineage-centric, focused on the Kaqchikel. Information about the K'iche' and other rival groups is included only as details relate to the Kaqchikel. Heroic origin narratives include others as a way of explaining their existence, but the protagonists are ancestral Kaqchikel. The Book of Mormon is a lineage history focused on the Nephites. Heroic origin narratives mention

Lamanites and others, but always from the point of view of the Nephite record-keepers who cast themselves as the good guys.

4. The documents that make up the chronicles come from several genres: origin myth, heroic narrative including military actions, continuous year-count annals, genealogies, tribute lists and court records. The Book of Mormon has all of these and more, including sermons, missionary journals, epistles, etc. [Mosiah 7:22](#) and [Mosiah 19:15](#) are tribute lists. The terrific book [The Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon](#) describes Nephite jurisprudential process, including formal court proceedings. [Ether 10:31](#) is one of many elite genealogies in the text. [Alma 63:7-9](#) is a classic year-count annal. Approximately one-eighth of Mormon's abridgement is all about war. [1 Nephi 18](#) is a fine example of heroic narrative. Even in the first generation, Laman and Lemuel considered their dynastic founding narrative a myth [1 Nephi 2:11](#).

5. Females are scarce in the pages of the Kaqchikel Chronicles, as they are in the Book of Mormon.

6. The Kaqchikel revered Tulan aka Tollan aka Tula as a faraway place of pre-eminent political power and cultural influence. Nobles received investiture of authority in Tulan. Lowland Maya epigraphy depicts Tulan as a place of cattails. First Teotihuacan, then Toltec Tula Hidalgo with its eastern counterpart, Chichen Itza, and finally Aztec Tenochtitlan all played the role of Tulan in their era (part 1, pages 3-4). We correlate the Book of Mormon city of Jacobugath [3 Nephi 9:9](#) with Teotihuacan. It was in the northern extremity of Nephite terra cognita [3 Nephi 7:12-13](#) far beyond Nephite or Lamanite political control. The Nephite far north was a land of lakes and rivers [Alma 50:29](#), [Helaman 3:4](#).



Kaqchikel Iximche and Likely Tollan Sites

Lake Chapala in Jalisco is modern Mexico's largest at 1,100 square kilometers. Lovely Lake Catemaco in the Tuxtlas has a surface area of 74 square kilometers. The largest lake system in Mexico in Book of Mormon times was in the valley where Mexico City sits today. Lake Chalco to the southeast, Lake Xochimilco to the southwest, Lake Texcoco in the middle, Lake Xaltocan to the northeast and Lake Zumpango to the northwest had a combined surface area exceeding 1,400 square kilometers. These were shallow lakes with many islands. Tenochtitlan was on an island in Lake Texcoco. Tula Hidalgo was 33 air kilometers to the NW. The Avenue of the Dead in Teotihuacan was 8 air kilometers to the East. Iximche was about 1,000 air kilometers distant. No rivers are shown in the central Mexican portion of the map above, not because they do not exist, but because it is very tedious to plot rivers as paths in Google Earth and our efforts have been spent in the core Book of Mormon area.

7. Monarchs preserve crown jewels as symbols of legitimacy. The Kaqchikel were no different. Their kingly regalia included gem stones, precious metals, feathers and weapons of war. Nephite crown jewels, passed down dynastic lines, included records on precious metal plates, the Liahona, the sword of Laban [Mosiah 1:16](#) and the gem stone interpreters [Mosiah 8:13](#), [Mosiah 28:13-16](#).

8. The Kaqchikel were organized into (part 1, pages 4-5):

- Chinamit which recent research indicates was a territorial rather than kin unit. These were villages, towns, or cities. Founding lineages enjoyed elite status within their chinamit.
- Amaq', which was a close alliance of contiguous chinamits. These were regional polities. One of its chinamits was dominant in each amaq'. An amaq' retained its identity and political structure even when its inhabitants migrated en masse to another location.
- Winaq, which was a confederation of Amaq's. The best English translation is "people" or "nation."

Book of Mormon peoples were organized into:

- Villages, towns, and cities [Mosiah 27:6](#), [Alma 23:14](#), [Mormon 5:5](#). These local polities honored their founders [Alma 8:7](#).
- Lands which were allied contiguous cities. These regional polities had principal cities of the same name [Mosiah 23:20](#), [Alma 8:18](#). The people of Ammon in the land of Jershon migrated en masse to the land of Melek [Alma 35:13](#). Residents of the land of Morianton attempted to move as a group to the land northward [Alma 50:25-36](#).
- The Nephites used both "nation" and "people" to describe their confederation [Moroni 8:27](#).

9. In AD 1493 the Tuquche' amaq' left the Kaqchikel winaq. Ca. 87 BC the people of Amlici in Ammonihah rebelled and temporarily seceded from the Nephite nation [Alma 2:9-11](#). Ca. 74 BC the Zoramites in the land of Antionum left the Nephite nation and joined the Lamanite empire [Alma 31:4](#), [Alma 35:11](#), [Alma 43:4](#).

10. We have a pretty good idea of how large the Kaqchikel winaq was - about 2,900 square kilometers in the modern Guatemalan Departments of Solola, Chimaltenango, Sacatepequez and Guatemala. It had the K'iche' to the north and west, the Aqajal aka Akul aka Chajoma to the NE, Poqomam speakers to the east, Nahuat-speaking Pipil to the south and the Tz'utujil to the SW. This winaq originally had 3 amaq's: Kaqchikel, Sotz'il and Tuquche'.



Approximate Extent of Kaqchikel Winaq

An amaq' was roughly comparable to a land in Nephite and Lamanite affairs. See the blog article "[Test #7 Land Areas](#)" for our estimates of Book of Mormon land sizes which are in the ballpark of reasonableness compared with Kaqchikel geography.

11. Among the precontact highland Maya the office of chronicler or historian was passed from father to son. Ditto among the Nephites [Jarom 1:1](#), [Jarom 1:15](#).

12. In the Kaqchikel Chronicles, as in many native Mesoamerican writings, history is thoroughly suffused with religion and metaphysics. The Book of Mormon fits this pattern precisely. Nephi, Mormon, Moroni and the other Book of Mormon authors used history as a vehicle to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their own day and down through the ages [3 Nephi 5:20](#), [Moroni 1:1-4](#).

13. The translators of the Kaqchikel Chronicles believe the highland Maya followed the same historical recordation patterns eye-witness Bartolome de Las Casas described in his *Apologetica Historia de las Indias* begun in 1527. Las Casas says native writers documented the foundations of their towns and cities, the election and succession of their rulers, examples of good and bad governance, exploits of valiant military captains, memorable deeds of notable men, and how social customs changed for good or ill over time. The Book of Mormon addresses the same six themes:

- City foundations [Alma 50:13-14](#)

- Leadership succession [Mosiah 1:9-10](#), [Helaman 1:5](#)
- Good governance [Mosiah 2:12-14](#)
- Bad governance [Mosiah 11:1-19](#)
- Valiant captains [Alma 48:7-17](#), [Alma 62:35-37](#)
- Notable deeds [Alma 63:5-7](#)
- Social progress [Alma 50:17-23](#)
- Social decline [3 Nephi 6:10-16](#)

14. The first Spaniards who saw native codices compared the characters and figures to Egyptian hieroglyphs. Book of Mormon written language had an explicit Egyptian component [1 Nephi 1:2](#).

15. Las Casas described five types of native books:

1. Histories tied to the secular calendar with day counts from a base date
2. Festivals and rituals tied to the sacred calendar
3. Dreams and prophecies
4. Rites associated with baptism and names given to infants
5. Rites associated with marriage

Histories with day counts, ritual calendars and divinatory manuals are known to have existed among the Kaqchikel in precontact times. The Book of Mormon contains histories with day counts [3 Nephi 2:4-7](#), references to the Law of Moses with prescribed rituals and festival days [Alma 30:2-3](#), [Mosiah 2:3-6](#) (Sukkot aka Feast of Booths or Tabernacles) and many prophecies [2 Nephi 26:3](#), [Helaman 13:9](#). In addition, the Book of Mormon has tractates on baptism [Mosiah 18:8-10](#), [Moroni 6:1-4](#), [Moroni 8](#); receiving a new name [Mosiah 5:7-12](#), [3 Nephi 27:5-6](#); and marriage [Jacob 2,3](#).

16. The Kaqchikel began using a new secular calendar base date commemorating the Tuquche' revolt on Eleven Aj 1493 (part 1, page 14). The Nephites also changed their calendar base date at important times in their 1,000 year history. For centuries they anchored to Lehi's departure from Jerusalem [Jacob 1:1](#), then to the reign of the judges [Alma 4:5](#), and finally to the advent of the Savior [3 Nephi 2:8](#).

17. The Kaqchikel consulted a divining stone on military matters (part 1, page 21). The Nephites, too, sought prophetic guidance before embarking on military missions [Alma 16:5](#), [Alma 43:23-24](#).



18. The northern boundaries of the Kaqchikel and Chajoma winaq's was the Motagua River. This same boundary persists today between Guatemalan Departments. Guatemala is south of the Motagua while Baja Verapaz is north of it. Chimaltenango is south while Quiche is north. Our Book of Mormon correlation recognizes the Motagua River as an important boundary between the greater land of Nephi to its south and wilderness to its north.

19. The Kaqchikel claimed to have endured long migrations from their place of origin to Iximche (part 1, page 14). The Book of Mormon tells of three long migrations to reach the promised land [1 Nephi 18:6-23](#), [Omni 1:15](#), [Ether 6:4-12](#)..

20. Punctuation is almost non-existent in the original Kaqchikel manuscript of the Xajil Chronicle. The original manuscript of the Book of Mormon has virtually no punctuation.

21. The Kaqchikel Chronicles have section headings (part 1, page 25). The original Book of Mormon text has colophons - section headings.

22. The texts in the Kaqchikel Chronicles are widely different in their levels of formality. The origin myth, for example, is highly structured and elaborate. Many yearly events are in terse single sentences with almost journalistic simplicity (part 1, page 25). The Book of Mormon has highly structured, elaborate texts such as [Alma 36](#). It also has single sentence annual event summaries that are models of brevity [3 Nephi 5:7](#).

23. Parallelism is intrinsic in Maya literature. Repetition abounds. Parallelism is evident at the level of morphology (word structure), syntax (sentence structure) and semantics (meaning). The Kaqchikel Chronicles exhibit many forms of literary parallelism (part 1, page 25). The Book of Mormon is so full of various types of parallelism that an entire edition has been published just to highlight its literary structures. See Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns* (Provo: FARMS, 1992, 2002).

24. Chiasmus, a particularly sophisticated parallelistic pattern, is found throughout the Kaqchikel Chronicles (part 1, pages 27-29). Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon has been well-known and widely-discussed since Jack Welch first pointed it out over 45 years ago. See John W. Welch, "[Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon](#)," [BYU Studies](#) 10:1 (1969).

25. The Kaqchikel Chronicles use the term "hills, vales" routinely to describe national territory (part 1, page 30). This phrase is attested in the Book of Mormon in a similar context [3 Nephi 9:8](#).

26. The Kaqchikel had an intimate relationship with their land, referring to it (our hills, vales) as if it were part of their corporeal being (part 1, page 30). Most Kaqchikel today have not strayed far from their ancestral homelands. The Book of Mormon uses the phrases "our land" and "their land" in a similar way implying a highly personal and possessive relationship almost as if the land were an extension of the people [Alma 16:8](#), [Alma 44:5](#), [Alma 54:13](#), [Alma 58:9](#), [Mormon 5:4](#). Both Kaqchikel [Ezekiel 35:8](#) and Book of Mormon [Genesis 47:19](#) variants of the phrase are attested in the KJV Old Testament.

27. Included in the investiture bundles ancestral Kaqchikel brought from Tulan were weapons of war which were subsequently used in actual warfare (part 1, page 31). Included among the Nephite crown jewels was the sword of Laban which kings used in real battles [Jacob 1:10](#), [Words of Mormon 1:13](#).

28. The Kaqchikel showed filial piety toward ancestors. The phrase "our father, our grandfather" was metaphorical symbolizing honor for the departed (part 1, page 30). In the Book of Mormon respect for forebears is highly regarded. The common phrase "our fathers" expresses this reverence [1 Nephi 19:10](#), [Jarom 1:9](#), [Omni 1:9](#).

29. The Kaqchikel Chronicles evince a strong correlation between spirituality and battlefield success. This idea pervades the Book of Mormon [Alma 57:35-36](#), [Helaman 4:24-26](#), [3 Nephi 3:2](#).

30. The phrase "divining power" is used frequently in the Kaqchikel Chronicles. The Book of Mormon equivalent is "spirit of prophecy" found 19 times in the text [Jacob 4:6](#), [Alma 5:47](#).

31. Great warriors in Kaqchikel tradition had "divining power," a gift merited through spiritual purity (part 1, page 32). In good times the Nephites selected supreme military commanders who had the "spirit of revelation and also prophecy." [3 Nephi 3:19](#).

32. Divining power was a high gift, rare among the Kaqchikel. Seers, rare in the Book of Mormon, had a high gift from God [Mosiah 8:13-17](#).

33. Great warriors in Kaqchikel tradition had "nawal power" aka "transforming power." This meant that in times of extremity they could change into their animal totems and/or acquire animal strength and attributes (part 1, page 32). This idea is attested in the Book of Mormon [Mosiah 20:11](#), [Alma 43:44](#).

34. The Kaqchikel recognized a deity they called Q'ukumatz, "plumed serpent" (part 1, page 33) or "quetzal snake" (part 2, page 52). Flying serpents are described in the Book of Mormon [1 Nephi 17:41](#), [2 Nephi 25:20](#). Among the Nephites, wings and a serpent symbolized the Savior, Jesus Christ [2 Nephi 25:13](#), [2 Nephi 25:20](#).

35. In the Kaqchikel Chronicles, when the amaq' sleeps, it loses battles and forfeits territory (part 1, page 36). In the Book of Mormon sleep is associated with military defeat or loss of dominion [Mosiah 24:19](#), [Alma 55:15-16](#).

36. When the Kaqchikel Amaq' arises, it wins, increases in stature among its peers, and earns respect (part 1, page 36). The Book of Mormon uses the word "arise" or the phrase "awake and arise" in a similar way referring to a group of people doing something noble or great [1 Nephi 18:5](#), [2 Nephi 1:14](#),

37. Death is associated with water among the Kaqchikel. Losers in battle "dissolve in death" (part 1, page 36-37). Death is associated with water in the Book of Mormon [1 Nephi 18:18](#), [Helaman 8:11](#). Dead warriors are cast into river Sidon so their bodies will be carried out to sea [Alma 2:34](#), [Alma 3:3](#), [Alma 44:22](#). See also point number 70 below.

38. When the Kaqchikel left legendary Tulan, they were one of seven amaq's (part 1, page 38). The notion of seven founding clans is common throughout Mesoamerica. See Diane E. Wirth, "[Revisiting the Seven Lineages of the Book of Mormon and the Seven Tribes of Mesoamerica](#)" in *BYU Studies* 52:4 (2013). The Book of Mormon lists seven founding families [Jacob 1:13](#), [4 Nephi 1:37-38](#), [Mormon 1:8](#).

39. The post-contact Kaqchikel self-identified as descendants of Israel (part 1, page 47). The Lehites self-identified as descendants of Joseph [1 Nephi 5:14](#), [Alma 10:3](#), [3 Nephi 10:17](#). See also point number 77 below.

40. A recurring theme throughout the Kaqchikel Chronicles is that the words comprising it should be preserved for future generations. The last words in the Xpantzay

Cartulary are "May these words not be lost!" (part 2, page 691). Ditto the Book of Mormon [Enos 1:16](#), [Mormon 5:12-13](#).

41. Great people in the Kaqchikel Chronicles remember the words of the ancients, they do not forget (part 2, pages 179, 193). Remembering is a noble virtue espoused frequently in the Book of Mormon [Alma 37:13](#), [Helaman 5:9](#), [3 Nephi 18:7](#).

42. The Kaqchikel worried about forgetting their language (part 1, page 52). Lacking written records, the Mulekites lost their mother tongue [Omni 1:17](#).

43. Precontact Kaqchikel cities were surrounded by fortifying walls (part 1, page 65). Book of Mormon cities had fortification walls [Mosiah 7:10](#), [Alma 48:8](#).

44. The Kaqchikel believed they had originally come from across the ocean (part 2, pages 2, 7). The Book of Mormon records transoceanic migrations [1 Nephi 18:8](#), [Ether 6:4](#).

45. The Kaqchikel believed they had come across the ocean from the west, landing along the Pacific coast of Mesoamerica (part 2, page 7). In our correlation, the Lehites made landfall on the Pacific coast of Chiapas or Guatemala about 135 air kilometers west of Iximche.



Proposed Lehi Landing

46. East and west, associated with sunrise and sunset, are the cardinal directions mentioned most often in the Kaqchikel Chronicles. We see the same pattern in the Book

of Mormon where east is the cardinal direction that appears most frequently in the text, followed by west.

47. Writings were among the sacred objects in the investiture bundles ancestral Kaqchikel brought from Tulan (part 2, page 15). The brass plates of Laban were among the sacred objects guarded by Nephite kings [Omni 1:14](#).

48. The Kaqchiquel perceived themselves as the last of the seven amaq's to leave Tulan. They referred to themselves as the "younger brother." The Kaqchikel Chronicles have numerous references to the younger brother as the brave one, the smart one, the one the other brothers look to for leadership (part 2, pages 37,46). It goes without saying the younger brother/older brothers conflict is one of the defining themes in the Book of Mormon [2 Nephi 5:3](#), [Mosiah 10:12-13](#).

49. After leaving Tulan, all seven amaq's made their way to the beach, but six of the seven had no idea how to cross the ocean. It fell to the younger brother to get the entire group across the waters (part 2, pages 38-39). Obviously, younger brother Nephi was the prime mover in the Lehite's voyage across the ocean [1 Nephi 18:22](#).

50. The Kaqchikel remembered two ways the ancients crossed the ocean, in boats (part 2, page 47) and on dry ground miraculously provided by God (part 2, page 39). The Book of Mormon mentions both methods as well.

- Ocean-going vessels [1 Nephi 17:8](#), [Alma 63:5-8](#), [Helaman 3:14](#), [Ether 6:4](#)
- Dry ground [1 Nephi 4:2](#), [1 Nephi 17:26](#), [2 Nephi 21:15-16](#), [Helaman 8:11](#)

51. As soon as the Kaqchikel arrived in their land from Tulan, war was rumored (part 2, page 46). Immediately after Lehi died, Nephi was threatened and warned to flee [2 Nephi 5:1-5](#).

52. Natural disasters the Kaqchikel remembered included avalanches (part 2, page 49), volcanism (part 2, page 83), volcanic ejecta causing darkness (part 2, page 87), thunder and earthquakes (part 2, page 136). The list of destructive forces in [3 Nephi 8](#) is very similar.

53. The Kaqchikel remembered encountering a people whose speech they could not understand and whose language they had to learn (part 2, pages 64-66). This recalls the Nephite experience when they first encountered the Mulekites [Omni 1:17-18](#).

54. The Kaqchikel recognized a place name called Saqik'wa' aka Saqik'uwa' which has been identified as the confluence of the Salama with the Chixoy-Negro (part 2, page 67). Another place they called Raxch' ich' which has been identified as the archaeological site Los Encuentros, also at the confluence of the Salama with the Chixoy-Negro. This is the precise point we identify as the Book of Mormon's head of Sidon. The Kaqchikel construct k'wa' or k'uwa' means a dug water-well, *pozo* in Spanish. A well, of course, is a point of origin for water.



Proposed Head of Sidon Called Saqik' wa' in Kaqchikel

55. Tribute payments were an important part of Kaqchikel life. Who paid whom and how much? These issues are addressed in the Chronicles (part 2, page 96). Tribute payments are also mentioned in the Book of Mormon [Mosiah 7:22](#), [Mosiah 19:15](#).

56. When a lord had vassals under tribute and those vassals left, it was a sharp blow to the lord's income, power and prestige. The Kaqchikel Chronicles record such an incident (part 2, page 93) as does the Book of Mormon [Mosiah 22:10-16](#).

57. The Kaqchikel in their writings distinguished between settled and wild lands. Their typical phrase for undomesticated lands was the couplet siwan "ravines" and juyu "hills" (part 2, page 159). The Book of Mormon equivalent is "wilderness" [Mosiah 19:28](#).

58. Royal heirs have been deposing their fathers and usurping the throne to accelerate their inheritances throughout human history. The Kaqchikel Chronicles record an instance (part 2, page 171). The Book of Mormon records several [Ether 7:4-7](#), [Ether 8:2-3](#), [Ether 9:7-12](#).

59. The Kaqchikel Chronicles report that on thirteen Iq' the town of Chi Awar was abandoned and the entire amaq' moved to a new location (part 2, page 183). In the Book of Mormon a similar exodus left the land of Morianton deserted [Alma 50:29-35](#).

60. When they built their new capital, Iximche, the Kaqchikel first enclosed the city within a wall. They then erected a plank palisade atop the wall as an additional fortification (part 2, page 185). Captain Moroni's fortifications ca. 72 BC consisted of a high earthen embankment or wall topped with wooden palisades [Alma 50:2-4](#).

61. At one point in their history, the K'iche' invaded the Kaqchikel, not with an army of 8,000 or 16,000 warriors, but with innumerable people (part 2, page 197). In Kaqchikel affairs, an army of 8,000 or 16,000 was a large force. Numbers greater than that were too many to count. We see a similar size pattern in the Book of Mormon during BC times.

- Ca. 63 BC 2,000 reinforcement troops arrived in Manti [Alma 58:8](#). Helaman<sub>1</sub> complained because he considered this an inadequate number [Alma 58:36](#). He called it a small force [Alma 58:12](#).
- Ca. 61 BC 6,000 reinforcement troops were considered a solid force, neither small nor large [Alma 62:12](#), [Alma 62:13](#).
- Ca. 66 BC Antipus, with a troop strength of 6,000, was preparing for one last stand. Helaman<sub>1</sub> came with 2,000 men and then 2,000 reinforcements arrived from Zarahemla. With 10,000 men the Nephites began offensive operations. [Alma 56](#).
- Ca. 63 BC Helaman<sub>1</sub> commanded a force of somewhat less than 16,000 men. He considered this a strong army [Alma 57:6](#), even referring to the "enormity of our numbers" [Alma 57:13](#).
- Ca. 87 BC over 19,000 dead on the first day of battle was a large loss of life, but still measurable. [Alma 2:19](#).

- Significantly more than that on the second day of battle were too many to count [Alma 2:35](#), [Alma 3:1](#) although the approximate number was in the tens of thousands [Alma 3:26](#).
- Ca. 76 BC tens of thousands of Lamanites were killed or scattered in the largest battle the Nephites had yet fought. The numbers were so large no precise count was taken [Alma 28:2](#).

For more Book of Mormon demographic numbers, see the blog article "[Population Sizes and Casualty Counts](#)."

62. Military units described in the Kaqchikel Chronicles include:

- much' = 80 soldiers (part 2, page 259)
- wo'-much' 5 X 80 = 400 soldiers (part 2, page 259)
- ju-chu'y = 8,000 soldiers (part 2, page 221)
- ka-chu'y = 2 X 8,000 = 16,000 soldiers (part 2, page 221)
- ju-ch'ob' = one division (part 2, page 223)
- ma-ki ajil-am = innumerable, not able to be counted (part 2, page 221)

The Book of Mormon also describes hierarchical military units [Alma 2:13](#).

63. The highland Maya fought with cotton body armor the Kaqchikel called k'ub'ul. The Nahuatl name for it was ichcayapul or achcayopilli (part 2, pages 198, 222). In the Book of Mormon it is called thick clothing [Alma 43:19](#).

64. Conch shell trumpets sounded battle calls in Kaqchikel warfare (part 2, page 201). Trumpets sounded on Book of Mormon battlefields as well [Ether 14:28](#).

65. K'iche' warriors who survived their disastrous invasion of Iximche were enslaved by the Kaqchikel (part 2, page 203). Slavery (probably of war captives) is well-attested in the Book of Mormon [Mosiah 7:15](#), [Alma 27:8](#), [3 Nephi 3:7](#). War captivity slavery is the sense of [Mosiah 12:15](#).

66. The Kaqchikel Chronicles describe a group called Kawoqs who prepared for war by erecting walls and digging trenches (part 2, page 213). The Book of Mormon describes the process of digging a ditch and using the fill material to build a defensive bank or wall [Alma 49:18](#), [Alma 53:4](#).



67. One battle took place at a bridge. The Kaqchikel word for bridge is q'am (part 2, page 221). The Book of Mormon describes four major military actions at three crossing points over river Sidon. One was between the local land of Zarahemla and the land of Gideon [Alma 2:34-35](#). A second was south of Manti where Zoram<sup>2</sup> and his forces liberated Nephite captives [Alma 16:6-8](#). A third was at the same place upstream from Manti where Moroni<sup>1</sup> and Lehi<sup>2</sup> routed the Lamanites under Zerahemnah [Alma 43:53](#). The fourth action was at Manti where Helaman<sup>1</sup> decoyed the Lamanite army out of the city and led them on a wild goose chase [Alma 58](#). The text does not mention a river crossing at this point. We infer a river crossing based on our correlation of Manti with the site of Chama. See the blog article "[Manti](#)." We find it quite remarkable that either Mexico or Guatemala has built a modern bridge at each of our proposed river crossing points. See the blog article "[Test #10 Crossing Sidon](#)." See the blog article "[Minon](#)" for a photo of the Boca del Cerro Bridge we correlate with the site of the Alma<sup>2</sup> Amlici battle described in Alma 2.

68. The Kaqchikel Chronicles use the expression "qi tzij" dozens of times to begin a sentence. It has the meaning true-word, in truth or truly (part 2, pages 68, 72). The Book of Mormon uses the expression "verily" dozens of times to begin a sentence [3 Nephi 20:24](#), [3 Nephi 23:9](#). According to the [Oxford English Dictionary](#), verily means in truth.

69. The Kaqchikel Chronicles use the term "ti-()-xib'-in" dozens of times meaning frighten (part 2, page 95). The Book of Mormon uses the similar term "fear" well over a hundred times [Alma 22:21](#), [3 Nephi 4:10](#).

70. An interesting Kaqchikel phrase is x-e'-ya'-ar k'a chi kam-ik, literally "water die," translated as "enter water," "become water," "dissolve unto death." Stela 31 at Tikal contains the phrase och ha' which has the same meaning. The Maya conceived of their underworld as a watery place (part 2, page 129). The Book of Mormon also has a direct connection between death and water [Alma 44:22](#) and a concept of corpses decomposing in water [Alma 3:3](#).

71. A passage in the Kaqchikel Chronicles describes nim-a' q achi' "great warriors," war captives allowed to remain alive to serve the victorious warlord (part 2, page 168). The Book of Mormon also describes a scenario where only chief captains among war captives were permitted to remain alive [Alma 56:12](#).

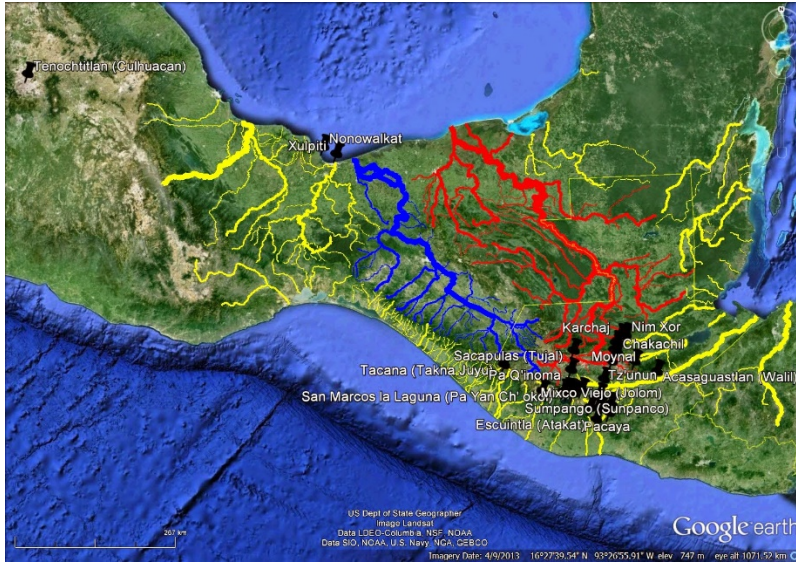
72. How far afield did Kaqchikel military forces range? During the mytho-historical period the Chronicles describe a seashore engagement involving boats with forces from Nonowalkat and Xulpiti. Adrian Recinos identified these places on the southern coast of Veracruz, near where we place hill Ramah/Cumorah. This map shows Iximche and Coatzacoalcos 528 air kilometers distant.



Iximche to Southern Veracruz Coast

This is consistent with distances we posit for Nephite and Lamanite military actions described in the text.

73. How large was the Kaqchikel known world? We have plotted many identifiable precontact Kaqchikel geonyms in Google Earth. Places attested in the text ranged from Tenochtitlan on the west to the middle Motagua on the east, and from the Pacific on the south to the Gulf of Mexico on the north. This is very similar to the extent of our proposed Nephite terra cognita.



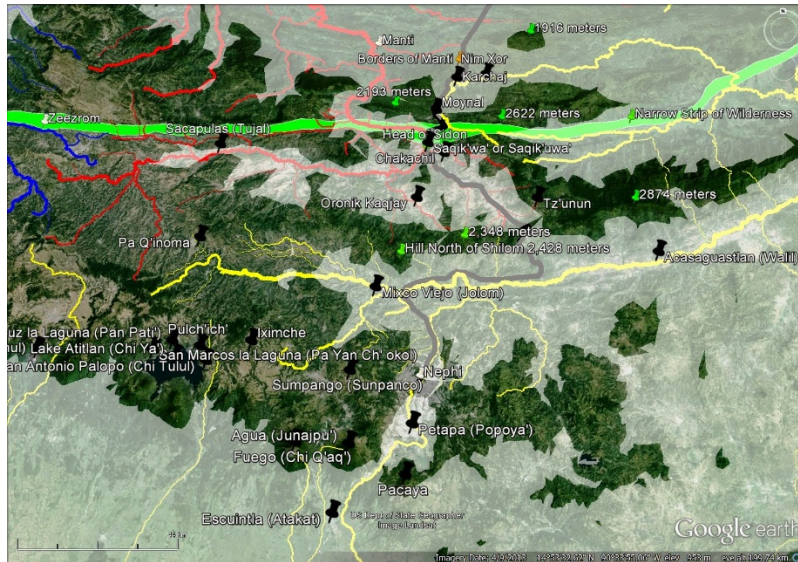
Black Pins Represent Places Attested in the Kaqchikel Text

As one would expect, the Kaqchikel world centered on their capital, Iximche.



Kaqchikel Geonyms Attested in their Chronicles

74. On the map below, black pins represent known precontact Kaqchikel geonyms. The white layer represents all elevations lower than 1,500 meters. The grey line is our idealized Nephi to Zarahemla route down the Motagua, over the Sierra de las Minas, down the Salama, over the Sierra de Xucaneb, down the Cahabon, past the Sierra de Chama and then down the Chixoy/Salinas/Usumacinta. Our narrow strip of wilderness is in green and Book of Mormon geonyms Nephi, Manti and head of Sidon are noted.



Kaqchikel and Proposed Book of Mormon Worlds

The known Kaqchikel world and our correlation for the highland Book of Mormon world match up well. The Kaqchikel would obviously have been very familiar with our proposed Nephi to Zarahemla trail.

75. When the Spaniards came, the tone of Kaqchikel writing changed. Gone are the vain glories and accolades. There is a sense of impending doom, inevitability and resignation. Their record becomes a pathetic history of the vanquished. In the books of Mormon and Moroni we see a similar pathos stemming from impending holocaust [Mormon 4:18](#). The Book of Mormon is the ultimate history of the vanquished [Mormon 8:3](#).

All Kaqchikel data to this point in the article are from precontact portions of the Xajil Chronicle.

76. Other documents in the Kaqchikel Chronicles document lengthy genealogies (part 2, pages 489, 495, 616 & 649). The Book of Mormon documents lengthy genealogies [Ether 1](#).

77. The Xpantzay Cartulary has a version of Kaqchikel origins redacted post-contact. The authors claim to be descendants of a) the house of Israel, b) the people dispersed after the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel, and c) emigrants who came to the Americas from across the ocean in seven ships representing seven founding lineages (part

2, pages 592-596). All of these ideas are expressed and fit comfortably in the Book of Mormon.

78. The Xpantzay Cartulary and the Xahil Chronicle both mention a precontact location associated with beards. The Kaqchikel phrase for beard is *ism-a-chi'* meaning "body hair mouth" (part 2, pages 158, 597). Beards were biologically and culturally endemic to Book of Mormon peoples [2 Nephi 17:20](#). Native American populations generally have scant if any facial hair, so the many ancient artistic portrayals of Mesoamerican individuals with full beards and moustaches are highly incongruous. In 1979 I wrote the short study "A Survey of Mesoamerican Bearded Figures" cited in John L. Sorenson, *Mormon's Codex: An Ancient American Book* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book & Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2013) p. 242. Since that time, V. Garth Norman, Diane E. Wirth and David Lee have all done studies of Mesoamerican bearded figures.

79. The Xpantzay Cartulary references *tun ab'aj* which means stela, literally "400 day count stone" (part 2, page 598). The Book of Mormon records an instance of historical information being engraved on a stela [Omni 1:20-22](#).

80. The Xpantzay Cartulary associates *r-aqan* "leg/foot" with a unit of length or distance (part 2, page 605). In the Book of Mormon, the standard Nephite unit of distance measure is a day's journey. See the blog articles "[Land Southward Travel Times](#)" and "[Test #6 Relative Distances](#)."

81. Kaqchikel society, like Mesoamerican cultures generally, was aristocratic. Favored lineages were entitled to special prerogatives and the right to rule (part 1, page 5). Mormon took a dim view of ambitious aristocrats whom he called "those of high birth" [Alma 51:8](#) "distinguished by ranks" [3 Nephi 6:12](#) who "professed the blood of nobility" [Alma 51:21](#).

82. Elites within a Kaqchikel *chinamit* were called *ajaw* "lords." The leader of a *chinamit* was also called an *ajaw*. The leader of multiple *chinamits* confederated into an *amaq'* was called an *ajpop* aka *ajpo* (part 1, pages 5, 7). Since there were multiple Kaqchikel *amaq'*s there were multiple *ajpops*. Book of Mormon equivalents were lower judges [Alma 46:4](#) and chief judges over lands [Alma 14:4](#), [Alma 62:47](#).

83. In Kaqchikel affairs, multiple amaq's allied to form the winaq' or nation. After 1493, two amaq's constituted the winaq'. The ajpops of the two amaq's governed the winaq' as co-regents (part 1, pages 5, 7). The Book of Mormon records two cases where the chief judge and chief captain governed the Nephite nation in a form of co-regency [Alma 62:11](#), [3 Nephi 6:6](#).

84. High-ranking Kaqchikel leaders were surrounded by personal cadres of elite warriors (part 1, page 5). Helaman<sub>1</sub> with his 2,000 "sons" [Alma 56:10](#) and Teancum's select force guarding Bountiful [Alma 51:31](#) come to mind.

85. Ajpop succession among the Kaqchikel was generally from father to son (part 1, page 8). We see this same patrilineal pattern among Nephite chief judges [Alma 50:39](#), [Helaman 1:2](#), [3 Nephi 6:19](#).

86. The Kaqchikel term "ajpop" literally means "he of the mat" (part 1, page 5). The Nephite term was "judgment-seat" [Alma 4:17](#), [Helaman 8:27](#).

87. The Kaqchikel Chronicles use the injunctive wa'e' "here" in a visual context because the original documents were pictorial in nature (part 1, page 14). The equivalent Book of Mormon phrase is "behold, here" [Jacob 5:16](#), [Mosiah 20:13](#), [Alma 44:8](#).

88. Modern Kaqchikel associate the color red with Satan (part 1, page 44). In the Book of Mormon, the color red is associated with a curse [Alma 3:13-18](#).

89. Modern Kaqchikel refer to Satan as ri itz' "the evil one" (part 1, page 44). The Book of Mormon uses the same term [2 Nephi 9:28](#), [Alma 46:8](#), [Helaman 12:4](#).

90. The Kaqchikel Chronicles describe a god who is at once creator and perfecter (part 2, page 11). God in the Book of Mormon is both creator [1 Nephi 17:36](#), [Mosiah 3:8](#), [3 Nephi 9:15](#) and perfecter [Alma 11:43-44](#), [3 Nephi 12:48](#), [Moroni 10:32](#).

91. Some among the Kaqchikel practiced bigamy (part 2, page 12). Jacob chastised the Nephites for taking multiple wives and paramours [Jacob 2:23-28](#).

92. The Kaqchikel associated a throne with power and dominion (part 2, page 20). In the Book of Mormon, rulers, both human and divine, sit on thrones [1 Nephi 1:8](#), [Mosiah 11:9](#), [Alma 60:21](#).

93. In its mytho-heroic origin narrative, the Xajil Chronicle recounts this conversation as the seven founding families of highland Guatemala were at the seashore wondering how to cross the ocean to their promised land: "We are two of the children, we are the top, we are the head, we are the first warriors, the seven amaq's. And you are my younger brother." The younger brother urges his elders to cross the ocean and seize their destinies rather than collapse and sleep (suffer defeat) at the water's edge (part 1, pages 36, 37). Correspondences with the Book of Mormon origin narrative are striking.

- Laman and Lemuel were two of the children, the eldest [1 Nephi 2:12](#).
- Lamanites and Lemuelites were two of the seven founding Lehte lineages [Jacob 1:13](#).
- Laman and Lemuel believed their seniority entitled them to the right to rule. They rejected their younger brother's leadership [1 Nephi 16:37-38](#), [1 Nephi 18:10](#), [2 Nephi 5:3](#), [Mosiah 10:15](#).
- Laman and Lemuel mocked their younger brother's plan to build a ship and cross the ocean [Nephi 17:17](#).
- Laman and Lemuel wanted to return to Jerusalem rather than journey to the promised land [1 Nephi 7:7](#), [1 Nephi 16:36](#).
- Nephi admonished his elder brothers to be diligent and obtain the land of promise [1 Nephi 7:13](#).

The Kaqchikel perceived themselves the younger brother in their version of this story.

94. Nonowalkat was a Nahuatl geonym located on the southern Veracruz coast. After a seaside battle victory, the Kaqchikel traveled eastward in Nonowalkat boats (part 2, page 48). Their peregrinations took them along the Tabascan coast, precisely the route we posit for the seafaring Mulekites (see point #18 in the blog article "[Test #9 River Sidon](#)").

95. In their wanderings before they settled their capital, Iximche, the Kaqchikel passed many hills. One was called Muqulik Ya' which means "cover, bury, or submerge with water" (part 2, page 57). [3 Nephi 9:7](#) lists three inland cities that were covered with water ca. AD 34.

96. Among the Kaqchikel, binding up or tying up was a metaphor for recording something in writing. This metaphor also appears in Mayan glyphic texts (part 2, page 63). The Book of Mormon uses the phrase "bind up" with precisely the same meaning [2 Nephi 18:16](#) citing [Isaiah 8:16](#).

97. The Kaqchikel used the Nahuatl loan word amatal meaning "paper" (part 2, page 64). The Nephites clearly possessed some form of paper [Alma 14:8](#).

98. At one point in their heroic past, the Kaqchikel discovered a group whose language they could not understand. The newly-encountered people recognized the authority of the recent arrivals, appreciated their coming, and asked them to stay (part 2, page 66). The people of Zarahemla, whose language was unintelligible [Omni 1:17](#), recognized Mosiah's authority and superior culture [Omni 1:19](#), and welcomed the Nephites who settled in their midst.

99. Among the Kaqchikel, the word k'ajol meant "vassal" or "son of man" as opposed to ajaw "lord" (part 2, page 67). The Book of Mormon uses the phrase "son of man" in precisely the same way, meaning a mere mortal [2 Nephi 8:12](#) citing [Isaiah 51:12](#).

100. Honey was a valued commodity among the Kaqchikel and bee-keeping is attested in their writings (part 2, page 77). Ditto in the Book of Mormon [1 Nephi 17:5](#), [1 Nephi 18:6](#), [Ether 2:3](#).

101. The Xajil Chronicle mentions dogs, turkeys and other domesticated animals (part 2, page 49). The Book of Mormon mentions dogs [Mosiah 12:2](#), [Alma 16:10](#) as well as flocks and herds [2 Nephi 5:11](#), [Mosiah 7:22](#) of domesticated animals.

102. The Kaqchikel remembered an event when fluid earth surrounded houses. Trembling and dust accompanied an avalanche. Houses, dogs, turkeys and other animals fought (part 2, page 49). Earthquakes are known to cause unusual animal behavior. See the blog article "[Geology of the Book of Mormon](#)." This colorful Kaqchikel language describes an earthquake and resulting landslide. The Book of Mormon describes similar phenomena [1 Nephi 12:4](#), [3 Nephi 9:8](#).

103. The earthquake mentioned above must have caused widespread ruin because the Kaqchikel enumerate six ethnic groups and describe how they were saved from complete destruction. Warriors from each of the suffering groups gathered one by one at hill Tapku Oloman. This was a special hill because it had previously hosted a major council. Tapku means "at the enclosure" and Oloman means "wooded place." The topic on everyone's lips was "Where did you save yourself?" (part 2, pages 43, 50-53). This recalls the Nephite survivors who gathered at the temple in land Bountiful marveling and wondering one with another [3 Nephi 11:1](#).



104. Several totemic deities were associated with the post-earthquake salvation (part 2, pages 51-53).

- The K'iche' deity of the sky was Tojojil "thunder." Angels representing God speak with the voice of thunder in the Book of Mormon [1 Nephi 17:45](#), [Mosiah 27:11](#), [Alma 36:7](#).
- The Sotz'il deity was Kaqix Kan "macaw remain" or "macaw snake." See point #34 above for the significance of bird serpents in the Book of Mormon.
- The Kaqchikel deity was Chi Taq'aj "of the earth, valleys, or plains." (Additional etymological commentary in part 1, pages 28-30). In the Book of Mormon Jesus Christ explicitly dominates the earth, valleys, and level places [Helaman 12:8-17](#). [Helaman 14:12](#).
- Another deity, Q'ukumatz, "plumed serpent" or "quetzal snake" was associated with water. The Book of Mormon also associates deity with water [1 Nephi 11:25](#), Moses was remembered for showing the power of God through both a serpent and water [2 Nephi 25:20](#).
- The Tuquche' deity was Ajsik Amaq' "above the polity." God in the Book of Mormon reigns "in the heavens above and in the earth beneath" [2 Nephi 29:7](#), [Mosiah 3:8](#).
- The Aqajal deity was Aqalajay "wasp/nest house." The Book of Mormon explicitly associates God with nesting creatures [2 Nephi 20:14](#) citing [Isaiah 10:14](#).

These various highland Guatemalan deities ruled over parts of the natural cosmos - sky, earth, water. The Book of Mormon attests this same heaven, earth, water cosmology [Mosiah 13:12](#). The Book of Mormon calls Jesus Christ "The God of nature" [1 Nephi 19:12](#). The top of a hill was a place of interface between the heavens above and the earth beneath [Alma 1:15](#).

105. The Kaqchikel were saved by burrowing into the earth (part 2, page 52). The Book of Mormon records two instances where salvation and deliverance are associated with holes in the ground [Alma 24:16-17](#), [3 Nephi 28:20](#).

106. The Kaqchikel conceived of a watery underworld (part 2, page 129). The Book of Mormon describes water under the earth [Mosiah 13:12](#).

107. The Kaqchikel distinguished between flesh and spirit (part 2, page 55). The flesh/spirit dichotomy is an important theme in the Book of Mormon [1 Nephi 22:1-2,2 Nephi 2:8, 2 Nephi 9:13](#).

108. The Kaqchikel remembered a time before they were settled agriculturists when food was only available on hill Pam Paxil (part 2, page 10). The Book of Mormon records two instances where people had to climb to high elevations to obtain food [1 Nephi 16:30-31, 3 Nephi 4:1-3](#).

109. Offensive and defensive armaments used by Kaqchikel warriors included arrows, shields, and spears, (part 2, pages 16, 29, 101). Arrows, shields, and spears are all attested in the Book of Mormon [Alma 49:24, Helaman 1:14, Alma 17:7](#).

110. The Kaqchikel word for "breastplate" was xajpota (part 2, page 62). The Book of Mormon mentions breastplates several times [Mosiah 8:10, Alma 43:19, Helaman 1:14](#).

111. The Kaqchikel talked about trapping birds by laying snares in trees (part 2, page 79). The Jaredites trapped birds in snares [Ether 2:2](#).

112. The Kaqchikel Chronicles record an instance of K'iche' becoming lost (part 2, page 79). The Book of Mormon describes several groups getting lost [Mosiah 7:4, Mosiah 8:8, Mosiah 22:16](#).

113. The Kaqchikel sacrificed war captives (part 2, page 97). Lamanites in the Book of Mormon sacrificed war captives [Mormon 4:14, Mormon 4:21](#).

114. Accouterments of power among the Kaqchikel included a bench and chair (part 2, page 98). In the Book of Mormon, both human and divine rulers have judgment-seats [1 Nephi 10:21, 2 Nephi 33:7, Alma 1:2, Alma 4:17](#). Nobles in the royal court sat in special seats [Mosiah 11:11](#).

115. The concept of standard units of area and length measure existed among the Kaqchikel (part 2, pages 107, 115). The Nephites used standard units of measure [Alma 11:4](#).

116. The Xajil Chronicle records an incident where a rival group, the Nik'aj Ko'on, took a Kaqchikel woman. The Kaqchikel threatened war and went looking for her, but relented when the woman was presented to them and told them she had grown

accustomed to her new home and wished to remain (part 2, pages 108-110). The Amulonites abducted 24 Lamanite women [Mosiah 20:5](#). The Lamanites retaliated militarily [Mosiah 20:7](#). A search ensued [Mosiah 21:20](#). The Amulonites presented their wives to the Lamanite army and the women, content to remain, plead for their husbands' lives [Mosiah 23:33-34](#).

117. The Xahil Chronicle is clearly abridgment literature, synthesized from a more complete and probably pictorial original document (part 2, page 111). Nephi<sup>1</sup> [1 Nephi 1:17](#), Mormon [Words of Mormon 1:9](#), and Moroni<sup>2</sup> [Moroni 1:1](#) all abridged earlier and more extensive original documents. John L. Sorenson's 2011 presentation entitled "[Mormon's Sources](#)" studies the Nephite abridgment process.

This numbering system continues with additional correspondences in the blog article entitled "[Rabinal Achi](#)."

Kaqchikel belongs to the Quichean sub-branch of the Eastern branch of the Mayan language family. Other dialects of Quichean include K'iche', Q'eqchi', and Achi. This map shows the various dialects of Mayan. Colors indicate branches and sub-branches. Font sizes indicate number of contemporary native speakers. Locations approximate geographic distributions. This map does not show important non-Mayan languages in the region such as Nahuatl and Zoque.



Mayan Languages Spoken Today in Southern Mesoamerica

The K'aqchikel Chronicles are part of a remarkable corpus of highland Guatemalan precontact documents written in Quichean languages using Latin script. These include:

- Popol Vuh aka Popol Wuj probably originated as a precontact glyphic codex no longer extant. It was transliterated phonetically into Latin characters probably between 1554 and 1558. This transliteration is no longer extant. Dominican Friar Francisco Ximenez redacted it in parallel K'iche' and Spanish columns in 1701 while residing in Chichicastenango, El Quiche, Guatemala. It was first published in 1857 in Spanish. The Ximenez 1701 manuscript is now in the Newberry Library in Chicago. One of the foremost Popol Vuh scholars in the world today is Allen J. Christenson of the BYU Humanities faculty.
- Title of Totonicapan aka Title of the Lords of Totonicapan, originally in K'iche', was transliterated phonetically into Latin characters ca. 1554, probably from a precontact glyphic codex no longer extant or possibly from oral recitation. It was translated into Spanish by Father Dionisio Jose Chonay in 1834, then first published in 1885 in both French & Spanish. Father Chonay didn't bother to translate the first seven of thirty-one folio pages in the K'iche' manuscript

because they so closely resembled Biblical accounts in the book of Genesis. In 1973, Robert M. Carmack, now SUNY Albany emeritus, was given access to the original K'iche' manuscript in Totonicapan where it resides today under the guardianship of the Yax lineage.

- Rabinal Achi aka Dance of the Trumpets, originally in K'iche', is the only surviving drama from the precontact Mayan theatrical repertoire. An early manuscript, no longer extant, was transliterated phonetically into Latin characters at an unknown date. That manuscript was copied by Bartolo Sis of Rabinal in 1850. In 1856, Sis read it aloud while Charles Etienne Brasseur de Bourbourg made his own copy. Bourbourg took his copy to France and the work was first published in 1862 in both K'iche' & French. The play is still being performed in Rabinal today.
- Kaqchikel Chronicles contain nine different documents originally in Kaqchikel, the most important of which is the Xajil Chronicle aka Annals of the Cakchiquels aka Memorial de Tecpan-Atitlan aka Memorial de Solola. It was transliterated phonetically into Latin characters in 1571 from an indigenous glyphic codex or historical map (lienzo). Subsequent scribes continued the annals through 1604. The document was copied in a single hand sometime during the seventeenth century. Discovered in Guatemala City in 1844. Brasseur de Bourbourg translated it into French in 1855 and Daniel G. Brinton first published it in 1885 in English. The manuscript of forty-eight folio pages now resides in the University of Pennsylvania library.

These documents share many personal names, place names, stories and motifs. They become increasingly accurate as they come forward in time recording first heroic mythic, then mytho-historical, and finally later historical epochs. Even the very early material, though, merits some credibility. Denigrated for years due to European Christian contamination, these documents are increasingly respected by Mesoamericanist scholars because mythic elements from them are found in art from Izapa (stone sculpture ca. 300 BC), El Mirador (plaster frieze ca. 200 BC), San Bartolo (mural ca. 100 BC), and the Nakbe area (early classic "blowgunner pot" Justin Kerr photograph K1226) among many others.

New World portions of the Book of Mormon took place in Mesoamerica (southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, western Honduras, western El Salvador) as John L. Sorenson's 2013 masterwork *Mormon's Codex: An Ancient American Book* makes abundantly clear. Six serious students of the Nephite text have published correlations

attempting to locate Book of Mormon geonyms on the modern Mesoamerican map. (Any would-be Book of Mormon geographer proposing major realignments of the Mesoamerican coastline during the Holocene is not considered serious.) The six are, in order of first publication:

- John L. Sorenson 1985, 2013. Lawrence L. Poulsen extends Sorenson.
- F. Richard Hauck 1988. Joe V. Andersen extends Hauck.
- Joseph L. Allen, 1989, 2008. Blake J. Allen collaborates with his father.
- Aric Turner 2004
- V. Garth Norman 2006
- Kirk A. Magleby 2011 (this blog)

All six place the city of Nephi within 90 kilometers of each other either a) at Kaminaljuyu in the Valley of Guatemala, b) in the Salama Valley (Baja Verapaz), or c) along the Polochic River (Alta Verapaz). All three of these proposed locations for Nephi are squarely within Quichean territory.

This means the Book of Mormon peoples and the Kaqchikel almost certainly shared a common geography. Separated in time by about 1,000 years, they shared many similar cultural and literary traits. They were on either end of the great classic Mesoamerican cultural tradition. Are 117 correspondences between the texts, ranging from vague and general to arbitrary and precise, adequate to establish a connection implying textual or oral tradition dependency? Not necessarily. There are four cultural traditions at work and we need to understand the relationships between them.

1. The Biblical world.
2. The Book of Mormon world.
3. The Mesoamerican world.
4. The Quichean world.

The Book of Mormon explicitly describes its relationships with the Biblical world. Science has established generally accepted relationships of Quichean peoples within the greater Mesoamerican world. Faithful scholars are increasingly able to show relationships between the Book of Mormon and the greater Mesoamerican world. Scholars generally don't deal with overt Biblical content in the Quichean literature, simply dismissing it as post-contact cultural contamination. The same thing happens with writings from Yucatan and central Mexico.

If we can identify compelling correspondences between the Book of Mormon and other Quichean documents - Popol Vuh, Title of Totonicapan, Rabinal Achi - that will strengthen the case for cultural transmission. If we can show the Quichean documents relate to the Bible the same ways the Book of Mormon relates to the Bible that will help elaborate a testable theory of cultural transmission that could benefit Mesoamerican studies in general. And that would help modern native Americans understand what great things the Lord has done for their fathers [Title Page](#) which is pretty much the point of both the Book of Mormon and the Kaqchikel Chronicles.

This list of correspondences continues in the blog articles entitled "[Rabinal Achi](#)" and [Titulo de Totonicapan](#)."