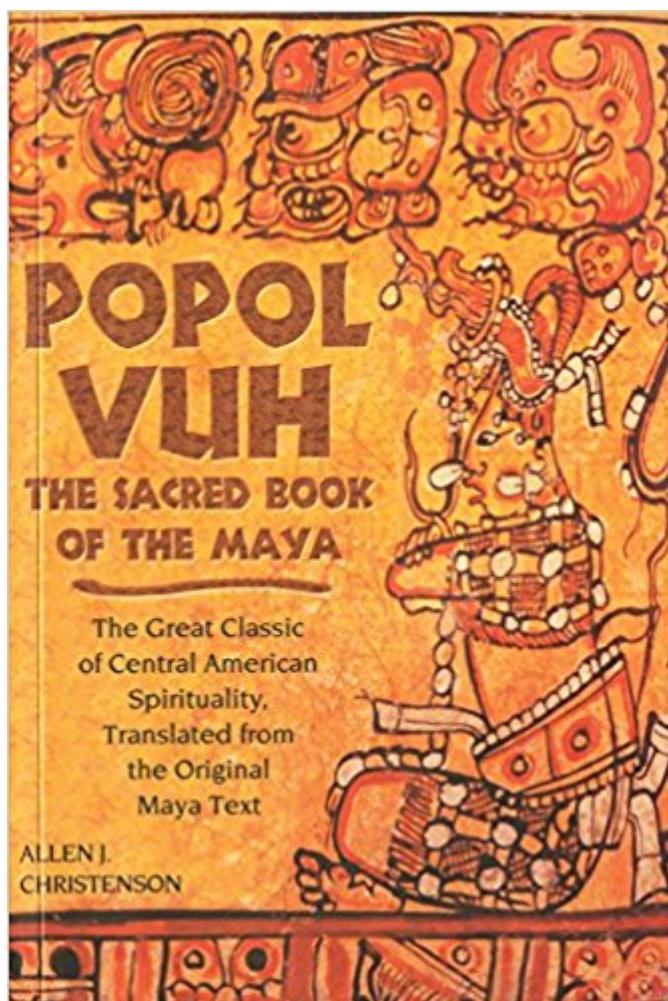


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Popol Vuh: The Sacred Book Of The Maya: The Great Classic Of Central American Spirituality, Translated From The Original Maya Text



Synopsis

The Popol Vuh is the most important example of Maya literature to have survived the Spanish conquest. It is also one of the world's great creation accounts, comparable to the beauty and power of Genesis. Most previous translations have relied on Spanish versions rather than the original K'iche'-Maya text. Based on ten years of research by a leading scholar of Maya literature, this translation with extensive notes is uniquely faithful to the original language. Retaining the poetic style of the original text, the translation is also remarkably accessible to English readers. Illustrated with more than eighty drawings, photographs, and maps, Allen J. Christenson's authoritative version brings out the richness and elegance of this sublime work of literature, comparable to such epic masterpieces as the Ramayana and Mahabharata of India or the Iliad and Odyssey of Greece.

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Customer Reviews

It would be a shame to let the slipshod and factually inaccurate review (below) pass without correction and comment as this is an exciting new scholarly edition of the most important extant Maya text. Even a cursory reading of the first page of the introduction (and throughout) would have supplied the information that the translator Christenson's primary Maya linguistic expertise is in Quiché (or K'iche'). And of course it would be extraordinarily foolhardy for anyone to attempt a translation of the Popol Vuh without a knowledge of the language in which the text is written. This is

not the place to rehearse the arguments regarding the purpose, practise and philosophy of translation - this has been done at great length by such well known commentators on the subject as Eco and Steiner not to mention the myriad even more technical writers. But the writer of the previous review passes judgement on the 'accuracy' of the translation compared to that of Tedlock's readable and famously demotic version. One has to wonder how this judgement has been arrived at, and logically, what third, control element was used against which to compare the accuracy of the translations. Surely this would have had to have been the 16th century Quiché text which would, of course, require a knowledge of that language and its historical orthography. It seems more likely that the reviewer simply compared the two translations; not much of a methodology. It would be a travesty if such an inadequate critique was allowed to stand unchallenged.

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