



Handbook of Middle American Indians, Volume 5: Linguistics

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This volume, the fifth in the *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, presents a summary of work accomplished since the Spanish conquest in the contemporary description and historical reconstruction of the indigenous languages and language families of Mexico and Central America.

The essays include the following: “Inventory of Descriptive Materials” by William Bright; “Inventory of Classificatory Materials” by Maria Teresa Fernández de Miranda, “Lexicostatistic Classification” by Morris Swadesh, “Systemic Comparison and Reconstruction” by Robert Longacre, and “Environmental Correlational Studies” by Sarah C. Gudschinsky.

Sketches of Classical Nahuatl by Stanley Newman, Classical Yucatec Maya by Norman A. McQuown, and Classical Quiché by Munro S. Edmonson provide working tools for tackling the voluminous early postconquest texts in these languages of late preconquest empires (Aztec, Maya, Quiché). Further sketches of Sierra Popoluca by Benjamin F. Elson, of Isthmus Zapotec by Velma B. Pickett, of Huautla de Jiménez Mazatec by Eunice V. Pike, of Jiliapan Pame by Leonardo Manrique C., and of Huamelultec Chontal by Viola Waterhouse—together with those of Nahuatl, Maya, and Quiché—provide not only descriptive outlines of as many different linguistic structures but also linguistic representatives of seven structurally different families of Middle American languages. Miguel León-Portilla presents an outline of the relations between language and the culture of which it is a part and provides examples of some of these relations as revealed by contemporary research in indigenous Middle America.

The volume editor, Norman A. McQuown (1914–2005), was Professor of Anthropology at The University of Chicago. He formerly taught at Hunter College and served with the Mexican Department of Indian Affairs. He carried out fieldwork with Totonac, Huastec, Tzeltal-Tzotzil, Mame, and other tribes.

The *Handbook of Middle American Indians* was assembled and edited at the Middle American Research Institute of Tulane University with the assistance of grants from the National Science Foundation and under the sponsorship of the National Research Council Committee on Latin American Anthropology.

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