



Pocomchí

with Grammatical



Texts

Notes

by Marvin Mayers

*illustrated by Katherine Voiglander
introduction by Norman McQuown
edited by Benjamin Elson*

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Introduction

This extensive collection of ethnographic texts in one of the Mayan languages will be welcomed by ethnographers and linguists alike--by the ethnographer, because it offers in the words and in the mother tongue of his informants first-hand data susceptible of ethnographic content analysis; by the linguist, because it furnishes similar data illustrative of linguistic categories determined by previous linguistic analysis. The grammar outline and the lexicon based on and derived from these texts (as jumping-off points for paradigmatic eliciting) make them even more useful as a basis for further linguistic analysis. An English key to the lexical material makes it immediately available for comparative purposes to the historically minded linguist engaged in the task of reconstructing Proto-Mayan and interested in tracing the history of the Mayan languages and peoples. We welcome this initial publication in Pocomchi and eagerly await the full grammar and lexicon which we know will follow.

Norman A. McQuown
University of Chicago

Author's Preface

The texts in the following volume were collected under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics during a period of field work in Guatemala extending from 1953 to 1957. The collector of these texts lived in the villages, whose names have been given to the three dialects referred to in the texts, for differing periods of time, living first in Tamahu, and last in San Cristobal, Alta Verapaz.

The informants used were neighbors of the collector or hired helpers, all of whom entered heartily into the writing and transcription of the material. They each one expressed their regret in not knowing any folk tales, other than the one concerning the origin of the corn, and so obligingly responded with the ethnographic materials that compose the major part of this publication. Fabian Koj and Pablo Mo' were men about fifty years of age and respected bi-linguals, each knowing how to read and write. Calixto Xocxoy and Mariano Pope were in their early thirties and not as proficient in Spanish or in the skills of reading and writing. Felipe Kej was in his early twenties and was advancing rapidly in his ability to read and write.

The collector wishes to express his thanks to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and all its friends, who have made this time on the field possible. He also wishes to thank the friends in places of authority in Guatemala who permitted him to live among

the Pocomchi and encouraged his work there. Special thanks should go to the wife of the collector for her patience and interest on the field, and for her faithfulness and industry in the editing and typing of the texts. Last, and most important of all, the appreciation of the author, and of all those finding this collection of texts useful, goes to the men among the Pocomchi who so patiently sat for hours during the collection of these texts, and who in their every word and deed proved to be true friends and valued teachers.

Marvin K. Mayers

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