

**SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, BUREAU OF
AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY, BULLETIN 68:
A STRUCTURAL AND LEXICAL
COMPARISON OF THE TUNICA,
CHITIMACHA, AND ATAKAPA
LANGUAGES**

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JOHN R. SWANTON

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BULLETIN 48

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JOHN R. SWANTON



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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY,
Washington, D. C., June 11, 1918.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit the accompanying manuscript, entitled "A Structural and Lexical Comparison of the Tunica, Chitimacha, and Atakapa Languages," by John R. Swanton, with the recommendation that it be published, subject to your approval, as Bulletin 68 of this Bureau.

Very respectfully,

J. WALTER FEWKES,
Chief.

DR. CHARLES D. WALCOTT,
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

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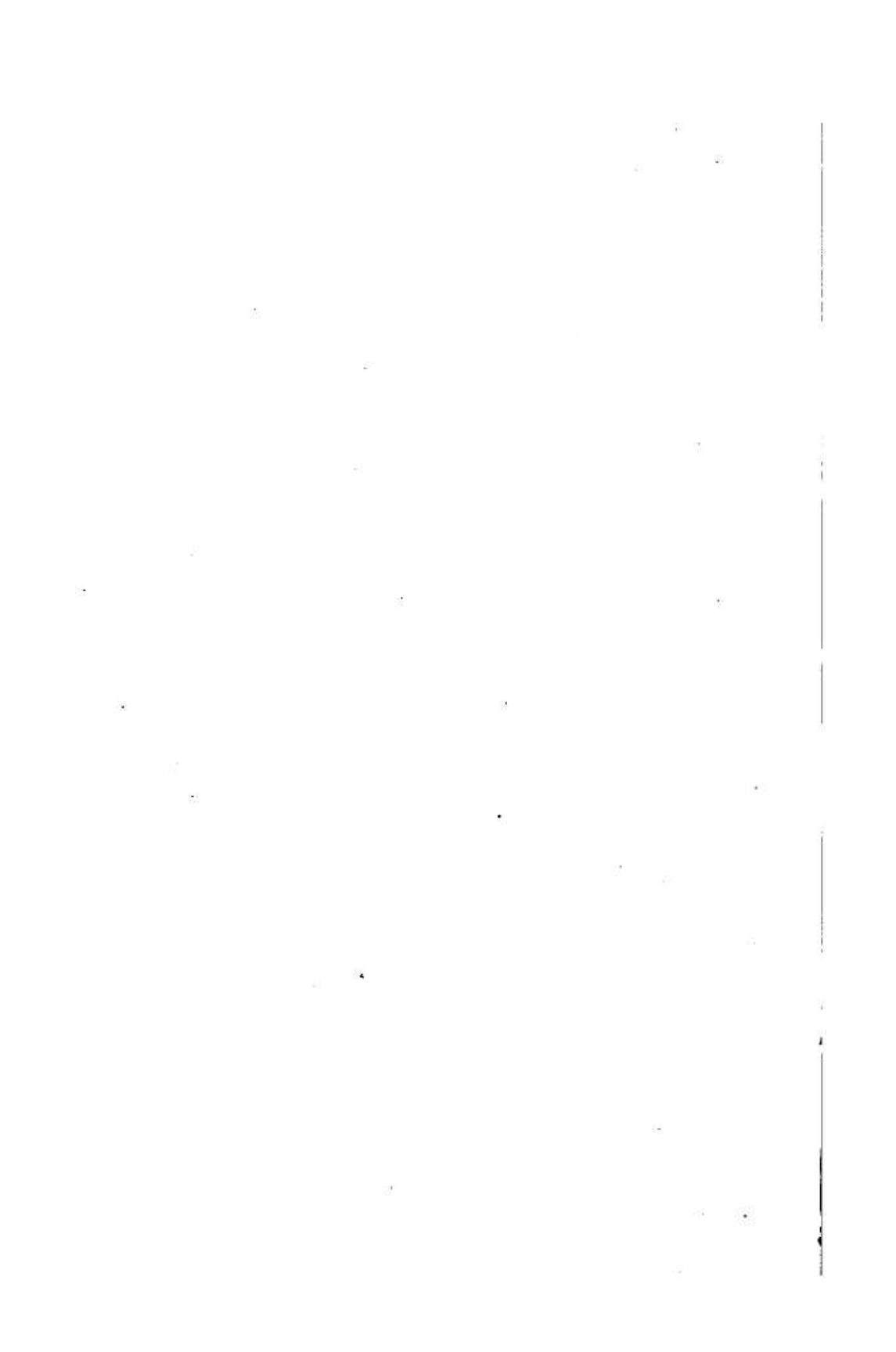
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A STRUCTURAL AND LEXICAL COMPARISON OF THE TUNICA, CHITIMACHA, AND ATAKAPA LANGUAGES

By JOHN R. SWANTON

INTRODUCTION

THE languages to be discussed in this paper were spoken within historic times in territory now incorporated into the States of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. The principal facts preserved to us regarding their history and ethnology have been made the subject of a special paper by the writer,¹ to which the reader is referred for detailed information on those matters, the main points of which will here be dismissed in a few words.

Tunica seems to have been spoken by five historic tribes—the Tunica, Yazoo, Koroa, Tiou, and Grigra. All of our linguistic material comes from the first of these, and it is known in some degree at the present day by perhaps half a dozen individuals living on a small reservation just south of Marksville, La. Yazoo and Koroa are classed with these on the grounds of historical association and a few statements of early writers, especially Du Pratz's affirmation that Yazoo and Koroa shared with Tunica the peculiarity of employing a true *r* which the surrounding peoples could not even pronounce.² The same writer includes Tiou and Grigra in this statement, and it is practically the only evidence upon which Grigra is placed in the Tunica group. In the case of Tiou, however, we have, besides, a direct declaration of the French officer, d'Artaguet, who affirms that in both customs and language the Tiou were identical with the Tunica.³

When we first hear of them the Grigra had taken refuge with the powerful Natchez nation, where they formed one town, and in Du Pratz's time the Tiou had done the same thing. Nevertheless we have good evidence, partly from Du Pratz himself, that the migration of the Tiou had happened at a very late period, and indeed one or two cartographers place them in their ancient territory upon the Yazoo River. The remaining tribes also lived upon, or at least spent most of their time upon, the Yazoo within historic times,

¹ Bull. 43, Bur. Amer. Ethn., pp. 26-27, Washington, 1911.

² Du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, vol. II, pp. 222-226, 1758.

³ *Marquess*, Newton D., ed. *Travels in the American Colonies*, p. 46, New York, 1915.