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PREFACE

The aim of this book is to offer an overall view of Mesoamerican Indian languages. Although the approach is basically synchronic, in view of the importance of the cultural development of the area before discovery, a historical perspective is adopted in the last three chapters. No previous knowledge of any Mesoamerican language is assumed on the part of the reader, but familiarity with basic linguistic notions and terminology is expected.

The presentation throughout the book is strongly descriptive with little, if any, room for theoretical considerations or generalizations. It has not been the author's intention to give his views on Mesoamerican languages, but to characterize them by adopting a view as neutral as possible. Consequently, except for changes in terminology, the discussion of the data has been kept close to the analyses given in the sources. This procedure runs the risk of a certain heterogeneity in the treatment of the materials, but this seemed preferable to the misinterpretation that might result from a reanalysis of languages which are often known only indirectly from a few descriptions.

The choice of topics dealt with, especially in chapters 5–8, has been largely dictated by the availability of minimally comparable data in the various linguistic families. In some cases important studies have been neglected because they were an almost unique contribution to a certain topic. The distribution of materials has aimed at keeping a balance between characterization of the whole area and a characterization of each linguistic family.

Given the coverage of the book, most of the data used are secondhand and are acknowledged in the sources. While it was considered that for the data in the phonology and morphology chapters global reference to the sources was enough, for the sentences quoted in chapters 7 and 8 precise references are given in the appendix. Whenever no source is indicated the data are from the author's unpublished materials.

An effort has been made to refer in the suggested readings only to published books or papers, but this was not always possible and some references are given to

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papers read at professional meetings. In case the reader misses some important recent item in the references he should notice that those given here were those actually used for writing the book and that, except for some items known in unpublished form, the author confined himself to works available to the end of 1979.

Thanks are due to Rubén Bonifaz Nuño, director of the Instituto de Investigaciones Filológicas, where this book was written as part of the author's activity at that institution.

Grateful acknowledgment is given to Henry Bradley, Katheryn Josserand, Norman A. McQuown and Mercedes Olivera for permission to quote unpublished materials. A general indebtedness shared by anyone working in this area is due to the members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and is reflected in the references quoted.

Charles J. Fillmore read an earlier version of the volume and made many detailed and useful suggestions not only as to content but as to presentation and style; most of his remarks were taken into account but, naturally, in no case is he responsible for any deficiencies the book may have. Also various suggestions, especially regarding Mayan languages, were made by Jon Dayley, but again only the author is responsible for the text.

The author is also much indebted to Mrs Penny Carter and Mr Robert Seal for their editing work and for the careful checking of the original to remove inconsistencies and omissions.

This book is dedicated to Norman A. McQuown, a tireless researcher and promoter of research in the field of Mesoamerican Indian languages.

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NOTATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- (1) separates morphemes in examples from Indian languages
(2) joins English words (in the English literal translation) that translate a single word or morpheme of the Indian language example

= (1) marks clitics in examples from Indian languages
(2) separates English words (in the English literal translation) that correspond to different morphemes in the Indian language example

( )= indicates the English literal translation of a morpheme that, in the Indian language example, has no overt manifestation

X is used in the English literal translation in the place of a morpheme that cannot be translated separately

Transcriptions are phonemic and use the International Phonetic alphabet; ʧ, ʂ and ʒ̇ are used for the voiceless retroflex affricate, the voiceless retroflex fricative and the voiced retroflex fricative respectively. Slant lines (/ /) are only used in some cases to set off phonemes or words in the phonology chapters.

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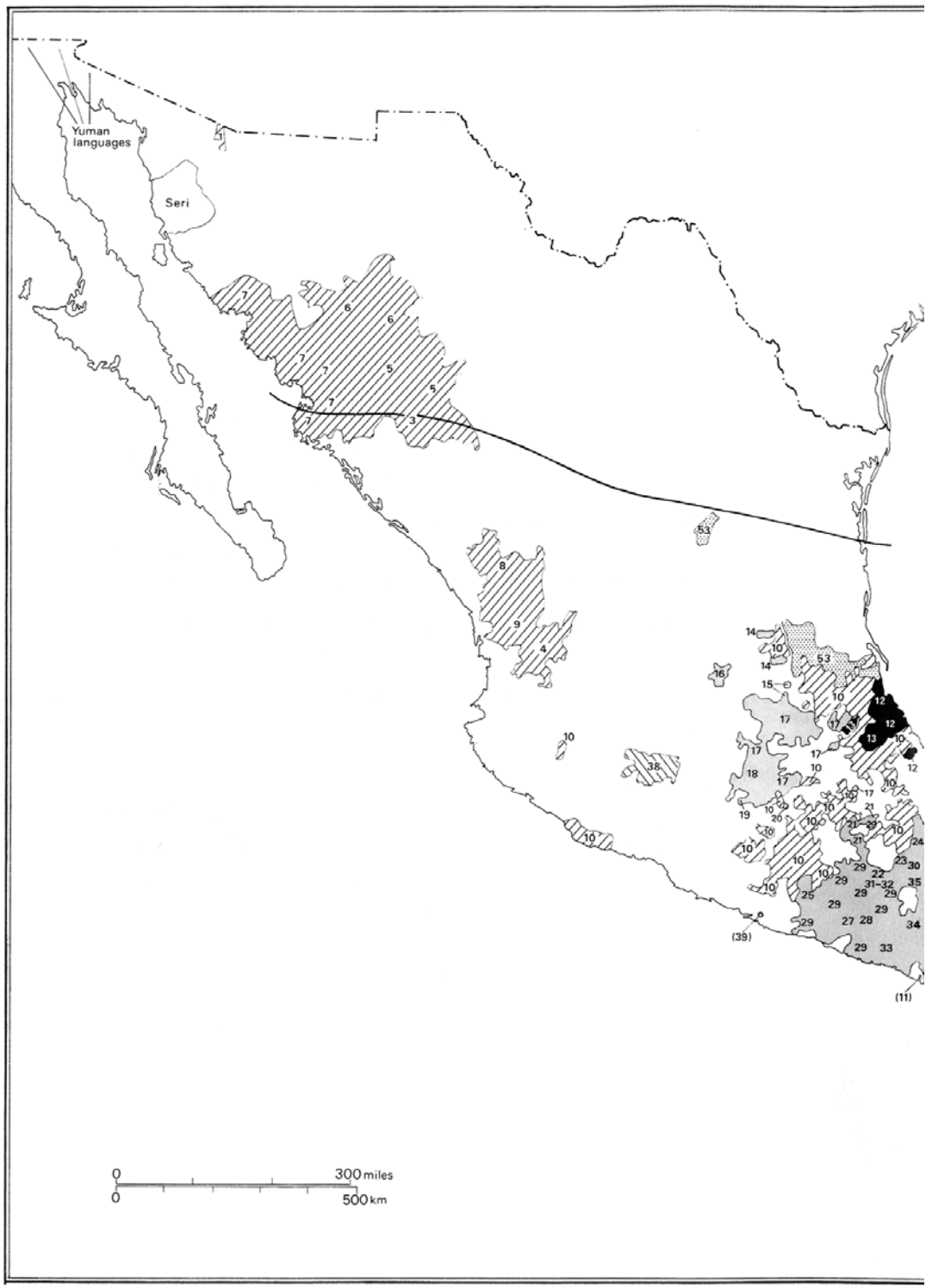

Map 1 Present-day distribution of Mesoamerican Indian languages

I	Uto-Aztecan 1–11	V	Cuitlatec 39
II	Totonac-Tepehua 12–13	VI	Tequistlatec-Jicaque 40–43
III	Otomanguean 14–37	VII	Huave 44
IV	Tarascan 38	VIII	Mixe-Zoque 45–52

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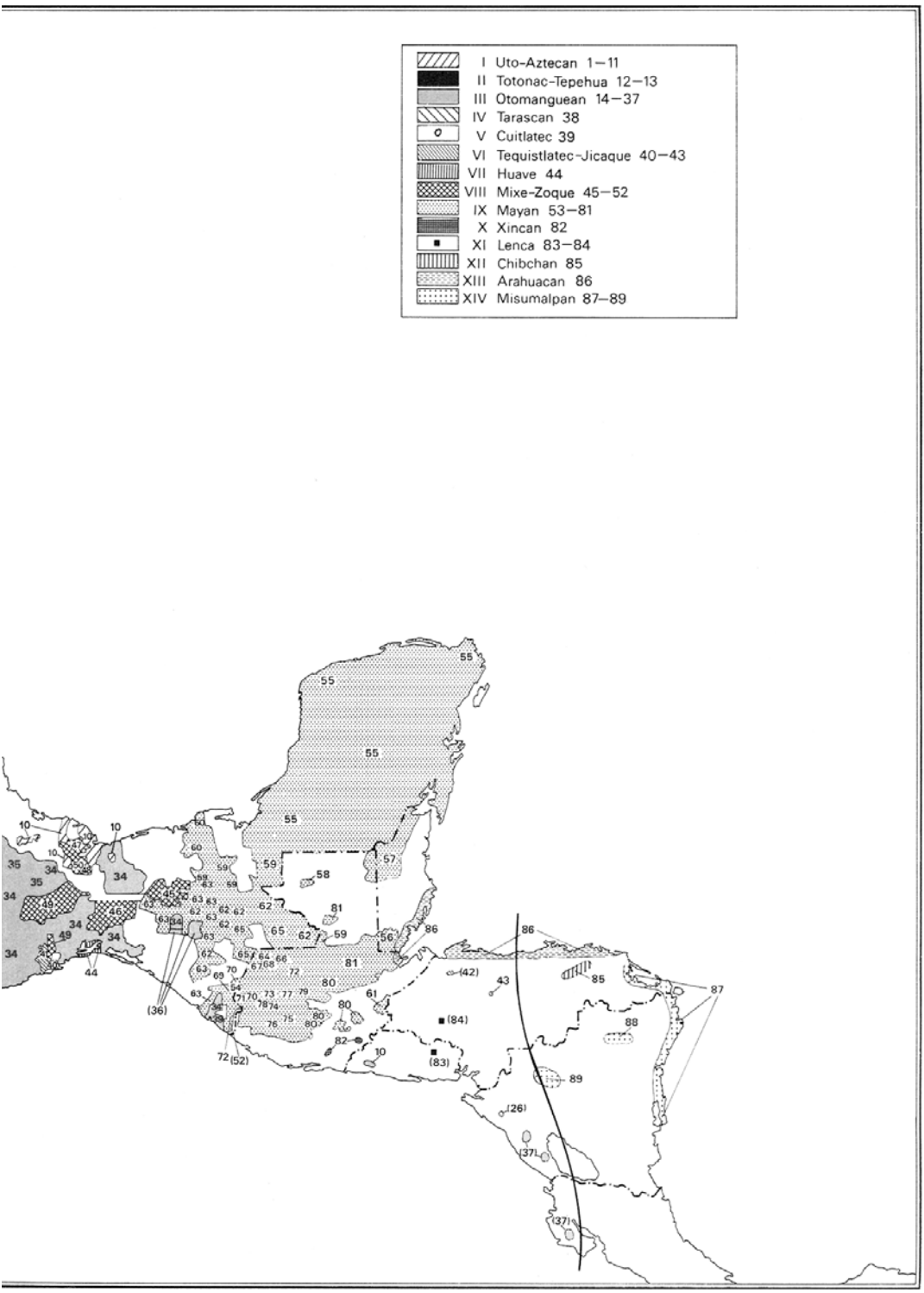

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Table 1. *Classification of Mesoamerican Indian languages and index to map 1*

I. UTO-AZTECAN*
- (A. Numic)
- (B. Tübatulabal)
- (C. Hopi)
- (D. Takic)
- E. Pimic
  - (1. Pima-Papago)
  - (2. Lower Pima)
  - (3. Northern Tepehuán)
  - 4. Southern Tepehuán
- F. Taracahitic
  - a. Tarahumara-Varohio
    - (5. Tarahumara languages)
    - (6. Varohio)
  - b. Cahitic
    - (7. Yaqui-Mayo)
- G. Corachol
  - 8. Cora
  - 9. Huichol
- H. Aztecan
  - a. Nahuatl
    - 10. Nahuatl languages, Pipil
  - b. Pochutec
    - 11. Pochutec†

II. TOTONAC-TEPEHUA
- A. Totonacan
  - 12. Totonac languages
- B. Tepehua
  - 13. Tepehua languages

III. OTOMANGUEAN
- A. Otopamean
  - a. Pamean
    - 14. North Pame
    - 15. South Pame†
    - 16. Chichimec
  - b. Otomian
    - α. Otomi-Mazahua
      - α′. Otomi
      - 17. Otomi languages
      - α″. Mazahua
      - 18. Mazahua
    - β. Matlatzinca-Ocuiltec
      - 19. Matlatzinca
      - 20. Ocuiltec
- B. Popolocan
  - a. Popoloc-Ixcatec
    - 21. Popoloc languages
    - 22. Chocho
    - 23. Ixcatec
  - b. Mazatecan
    - 24. Mazatec languages
- C. Subtiaba-Tlapanec
  - 25. Tlapanec
  - 26. Subtiaba†
- D. Amuzgo
  - 27. Guerrero Amuzgo
  - 28. Oaxaca Amuzgo
- E. Mixtecan
  - a. Mixtec
    - 29. Mixtec languages
  - b. Cuicatec
    - 30. Cuicatec
  - c. Trique
    - 31. Copala Trique
    - 32. Chicahuaxtla Trique
- F. Chatino-Zapotec
  - a. Chatino
    - 33. Chatino languages
  - b. Zapotecan
    - 34. Zapotec languages‡
- G. Chinantecan
  - 35. Chinantec languages
- H. Chiapanec-Mangue
  - 36. Chiapanec†
  - 37. Mangue†

IV. TARASCAN
- 38. Tarascan

V. CUITLATEC
- 39. Cuitlatec†

VI. TEQUISTLATEC-JICAQUE
- A. Tequistlatecan
  - 40. Coastal (or Lowland or Huamelula) Chontal
  - 41. Highland Chontal
- B. Jicaque
  - 42. Jicaque from El Palmar†
  - 43. Jicaque from La Flor

VII. HUAVE
- 44. Huave

VIII. MIXE-ZOQUE
- A. Zoquean
  - 45. Chiapas Zoque

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46. Oaxaca Zoque
47. Sierra Popoluca
48. Texistepec

B. Mixean
a. Mixe
49. Mixe languages
50. Sayula Popoluca
51. Oluta Popoluca
b. Tapachultec
52. Tapachultec†

IX. MAYAN
A. Huastecan
53. Huastec
54. Chicomuceltec
B. Yucatecan
55. Yucatec
56. Mopán
57. Itzá
58. Lacandon
(Western group)
C. Greater Tzeltalan
a. Cholan
59. Chol
60. Chontal
61. Chortí
b. Tzeltalan
62. Tzeltal
63. Tzotzil
D. Greater Kanjobalan
a. Chujean
64. Chuj
65. Tojolabal
b. Kanjobalan
α. Kanjobal group
66. Kanjobal
67. Jacaltec
68. Acatec
β. Cotoque
69. Mototzintlec-Tuzantec (Mochó)
(Eastern group)
E. Greater Mamean
a. Mamean
70. Mam
71. Teco
b. Ixilan
72. Ixil
73. Aguacatec
F. Greater Quichean
a. Quichean
74. Quiché
75. Cakchiquel
76. Tzutuhil
77. Sacapultec
78. Sipacapa
b. Uspantec
79. Uspantec
c. Pokoman-Pocomchí
80. Pokoman-Pocomchí
d. Kekchí
81. Kekchí

X. XINCA
82. Xinca languages†?

XI. LENCA
83. El Salvador Lenca†
84. Honduras Lenca†

XII. CHIBCHAN§
85. Paya

XIII. ARAHUACAN**
86. Black Carib (Garífuna)

XIV. MISUMALPAN
87. Miskito
88. Sumu
89. Matagalpa

---

*Languages or subgroups in parentheses are outside Mesoamerica.
†Extinct language.
‡In some classifications of Mesoamerican languages 'Papabuco' is listed either as a distinct Zapotec subgroup or as a further group at the same level as Zapotec and Chatino groups, but Papabuco is simply a Zapotec language that just happened to receive a distinct name in historical sources (cf. Suárez 1972).
§A large family; the rest is located in Central and South America.
**A large family; the rest is located in South America.

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