NOTES

Though the first aim of this department is to comment and amplify data contained in the section of DOCUMENTS, independent observations are welcome. Each item is assigned a number, and references in future issues may be made to this number. "N" indicates "Note"; "I:1" indicates "Volume I, Number 1," etc.

NOTES

[N 23 II:1] PAUL RADIN'S "CLASSIFICATION OF THE LANGUAGES OF MEXICO".

With surprize mingled with genuine satisfaction I have read Dr. Paul Radin's recent exposition of ideas regarding a revised classification of Indian languages [1] and I sincerely hope that a few comments of my own will not add too much fuel to a controversy which threatens to become heated. Coming as they do from a non-professional, my remarks need not be taken too weightily.

In a recent paper [2] I expressed the opinion that we might have to revise our concepts of strict division betwen the languages of the southern U. S., Mexico and Central America and conceive rather of four discrete groups, having been led to this conclusion by the similarity of roots in Mayan, Otomangue, Hokan and Yuto-Aztecan, a similarity which speaks for a common ancestry of these at a very remote period.

Doubt was also expressed in my paper about a successive occupation of Central Mexico by these groups, and it was held that the great differentiation of Hokan and Otomangue must have required a very long formational time-period and that all four groups must once have existed in close proximity to one another. I suggested that this separation probably took place in pre-archaeological epochs, and finally hinted that we may have to deal with linguistic "stratification" just as we operate with archaeological stratifications and culture zones or ethnographic blocs.

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[1] Tlalocan, N 13 I: 3.

[2] Las lenguas del sur de EE. UU. y el norte de México, read at the Round Table Meeting, Mexico City, September, 1943. An extract of this is published in El Norte de México y el Sur de EE. UU., México, 1943, pp. 181-185.

Likewise, in a previous paper[3] I had already called attention to the possibility that Cuitlatec, Tlappanec and Tarascan might be related to Otomangue, giving some noteworthy examples of lexical resemblances and sound shifts. I also ventured the opinion that neither family tree nor wave theory alone would furnish a graphic picture of events in space and time and suggested a three-dimensional presentation which would allow us to visualize genetic origin and mutual influence at various time-levels. Finally, I pointed out certain similarities which exist between Yuto-Aztecan and Otomangue on the one hand and between Hokan and Otomangue on the other.

After this somewhat lengthy preamble it is natural that I should welcome Paul Radin's quite revolutionary departure in classifying languages on a new basis: by means of strata rather than by horizontal distribution of changeless and rigid groups. Above all, the proposed system allows us "depth"—I have always felt, without daring to overstep the rules myself, that there was something lacking in the usual classification systems. Dr. Radin's classification avoids the old limitations, allowing for historial depth and space in which linguistic processes (such as genetic growth and mutual borrowing by contact and acculturation) are given room in which to operate. And at the same time, the new classification does not necessarily exclude the use of well-known terms such as Yuto-Aztecan or Otomangue if we wish to refer briefly to groups of closely related languages.

As far as Radin's proposed table of the languages of North America and Mexico is concerned, perhaps he will permit me to append a few observations, some of a specific and others of a general nature.

To begin with Radin's A I, I would call attention to the great dissimilarity which exists within the family termed Otomi. This family possesses a stratification of its own, wherein certain marginal languages like Matlatzinca or Pame-Chichimec relate more closely to other languages of the Otomangue group (for instance, Mangue-Chiapanec) than they do to the more worn-down, central languages (such as Zapotec or Chinantec). To Mixtec should be added Cuicatec and probably Amuzgo. Mazatec forms a very closely knit

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[3] Los pueblos no-nahuas de la Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca. Revista Mexicana de Estudios Antropológicos, 5: 249-269. Mayo-Diciembre, 1941.

family in common with Chocho, Popoloca and Ichcatec. Trique may be placed between Mazatec and Mixtec. Chinantec probably stands nearest to Zapotec and Mangue and perhaps Tlappanec. Chiapanec and Mangue are so close to one another that they need not be counted separately.

The above additions and suggestions are meant only to put the languages in their relative order and have nothing to do with the stratifications within the group. They do increase the relative size of Substratum A I when compared with others.

As to Radin's A II and A III, I have gone over Swanton's and Sapir's conclusions and have pointed out the progressive resemblances of Tunica, Chitimacha, Atakapa and Tonkawa; first with Karankawa, and then with Coahuilteco (Coahuilteco, Comecrudo and Cotoname). I also noted the great similarity existing Between Coahuilteco and Pomo, Cahuilla, Seri, Chontal and Subtiaba-Tlappaneco, — a similarity already proposed by Sapir long ago.

In A IV I miss Totonac, which according to McQuown connects via Tepehua with Zoque-Maya, and on which basis he postulates a Macro-Mayan group. Popoluca of Vera Cruz and Tapachulteco undoubtedly belong to the Mixe-Zoque group.

This leaves Tarascan, Cuitlatec and Guaycura still unaccounted for. I have always felt that Tarascan must be much closer to AI than Radin would suppose, and that with Cuitlatec, Guaycura and probably Tlappanec-Subtiaba it might form a separate Substratum which would underlie and connect with Radin's Substratum A. It may be remarked that a study of Cuitlatec and of what little is known about Guaycura, together with a competent comparative study of Tarascan is one of the most urgent tasks in Mexican linguistics.

About Substrata B and C, I am not prepared to venture an opinion, as I am quite unfamiliar with these groups.

It is not impossible that these three languages represent a very primitive stratum embodying features which are at the root of Hokan-Otomangue relationship. Incidentally, I also venture the opinion that we shall never arrive at a satisfactory perspective of the events leading to the peopling of Mexico unless the peculiar position of Tarascan and Cuitlatec be made the subject of intense study, archaeologically, ethnographically and above all, linguistically.

So much for the three proposed strata themselves.

Let us now examine the system as a whole. Here I would like

to ask Dr. R. if we can permit ourselves to limit such a classificatory system to North America and Mexico and to stop short at the borders of Guatemala. Archaelogists do not leave out the regions farther south in their comparisons of pottery types or architecture, nor do ethnologists, who continuously call attention to the existence of culture traits, usually of a very primitive nature, which have a wide distribution in both halves of the continent. So why stop with a linguistic classification in Mexico or Guatemala when we have included Maya in the system?

The peculiar wedge-like position of the Mayan language group with its marginal fringe of genetically related tongues (Zoque-Mixe) to the north should direct our attention also to the southern marginal area, where the Xinca-Lenca group relate perhaps as much to Maya as Mixe-Zoque does. But we may go even farther south. What if some day we should discover resemblances between Tarascan and Quechua or Aymará or between Yunga and Huave or Chontal, or what if Schuller's vast dream of a great pan-Maya-Quiche-Carib-Arawak family group, extending through half of South America, should have some foundation? Would we not then have to make radical revisions in our system, which at present appears well balanced towards the North, and provide for extentions toward the South, lest it become lopsided in that direction? It takes a longer time to fly from Central Mexico to the mouth of the St. Lawrence or Columbia Rivers than it does to the mouth of the Orinoco.

This brings us to another point. In much of the literature of linguistics (and perhaps more so in that of archaeology) we are given to understand that most of the major groups arrived in Mexico and Central America by migration from the North. Why, for instance, the Penutians should leave their salmon streams, the buffalo hunters their vast praries, and the eastern woodland people their fertile fields and forests to come to the semi-desert lands of Northern Mexico's plateau, may well be asked. There must surely have been some special attraction, some mystic "Drang nach dem Süden" to induce them to come all this long way, only to stop in Central America as if halted by some kind of invisible fortified Canal Zone!

Now I have always been reluctant to accept migrations as a normal tribal activity. We probably have to assume migrations in the case of the southern Athabascans leaving their homes in the North, or in the Nahua-Pipils of Central America; in the split of

Subtiaba from Tlappanec and of Mangue from Chiapanec, where linguistic evidence speaks for a rather late separation. But this was probably not the normal way of occupying new lands, nor was it the normal pattern in Europe. Most of these movements, I feel, must have been slow and gradual penetrations (or better, displacements) accompanied by acculturation, progressive absorption and in certain cases (Trique, Otomi, Chontal, etc.) survival in less hospitable regions. It is principally due to these survivals in isolated places that we gain some insight into how and when these historical processes operated. But if we must have migrations, why not have them in just the opposite direction?

We could, with a little imagination, conceive that after both halves of the continent were finally occupied by primitive immigrants, a relatively greater population density developed in the south, favored by climatic conditions, where an agricultural stage was reached because of better climatic conditions although the spread of agriculture may have occured quite independently. By the time climatic conditions in the north became favorable, a slow stream of groups of people might again have passed northward, where they would have found their home in Northern America. That such South to North movements did actually take place, and in a much more hazardous manner, the successive peopling of the Antilles by Arawak and Carib tribes indicates. Many an enigma in archaeology, ethnography and linguistics would find a more plausible explanation through such a theory than by adhering to a North to South movement.

Be this as it may, the way to arrive at a solution of the problem of classifying the languages of Mexico and North America consists, as Radin suggests, in reexamining the whole gamut of Indian languages, and doing this under the premise that no relationship between any of them has so far been proved. Strata and substrata can then be worked out until we arrive at a new classification for all the languages north and south of Mexico. This could perhaps be initiated with the help of a well-thought-out system of quantitative analysis which would have to include not only semantic similarities or differences, but also phonemic and principally morphological features.

I cannot close without expressing my satisfaction from another viewpoint. Radin's article reveals the fact that there are still some unorthodox linguists who dare occupy themselves with comparative

linguistics on American languages, boldly establishing linguistic associations where we feared none were wanted.—R. J. WEITLANER.

[N 24 II:1] THE LACANDON OF THE 1790's [1]

Material concerning the visits of a Padre José Antonio Calderón [2] to the Lacandon in 1799 is given in those two rare volumes which form the Colección de documentos inéditos relativos a la Iglesia de Chiapas hecha por el Ilmo. y Rmo. Sr. Doctor Don Francisco Orozco y Jiménez, Obispo de la misma. San Cristóbal Las Casas, 1911.

The town of San José de Gracia Real had a population of thirty one Lacandons in 1779, and was situated eight leagues from Palenque, of which town Father José Antonio Calderón was then cura.

The Chiapas collection of documentos inéditos obviously should be read in conjunction with the correspondence on the Lacandons in the Bancroft library.—J. ERIC THOMPSON.

[1] Cf. N4 I:2.

[2] Surely the Manuel Josef Calderón of N4 I:2 (Ed.)

[N 25 II:1] THE TLACOTEPEC MIGRATION LEGEND.

During a recent expedition to the State of Guerrero in which the writer participated, a legend of prehispanic migrations was discovered in the town of Tlacotepec.[1] Although many of the elderly people of Tlacotepec are familiar with this legend, the fullest version was supplied by Sr. Navidad Paco, an official of the town who heard it from his grandparents José Natividad and Petra Téllez. Petra Téllez died in 1933 at the age of ninety six; and she had learned the story from her mother María Margarita, Sr. Paco's great grandmother. The story was formerly told in náhuatl, and the writer recorded a fragment in this language from another informant.[2] Sr. Paco, an enthusiastic local historian, has written the story down in Spanish, in a somewhat literary style, and most generously loaned the writer his manuscript. The story as recorded by Sr. Paco falls into two divisions: how Tlacotepec was founded, and how the nearby hill of Tototepec received its name. No other single informant gave both these stories together, during our brief stay in Tlacotepec, so they have been seperated below. There can be no question of the accuracy of Sr.

[1] Cf. map and account in N22 Tlalocan I:4.

[2] Cf. Note 6.