

## Jucap: A New Linguistic Region in Colonial Honduras?

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### Introduction

Maps showing the past distribution of Honduran languages normally display six major linguistic regions, those areas occupied by the Miskito, Pech (Paya), Tahwaka (Sumu), Tol (Jicaque), Chortí Maya, and Lenca (map 1). Further, two zones of "generic" Indian occupation, labeled "Indians of Santa Bárbara," and "Indians of El Paraíso" also appear (Cruz S. 1984). Specifics on the language and ethnicity of these latter two regions have not been determined. However, a case might be made that the El Paraíso group is a northern extension of the Matagalpa of Nicaragua; the second population in Santa Bárbara could possibly be identified as remnants of the linguistic group discussed in this essay -- the *Jucap* (see end note).

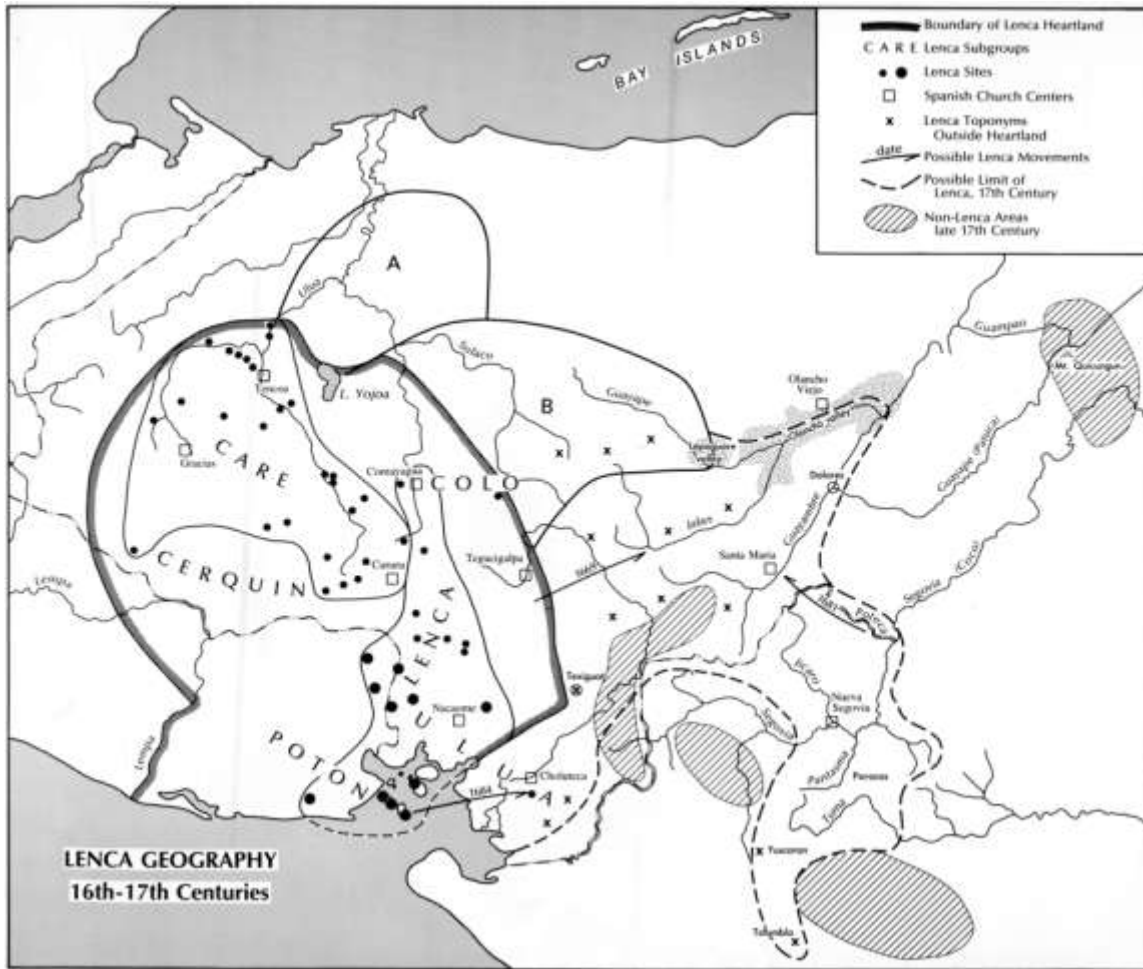
**Map 1. Indigenous Regions of Honduras, approximate for 1780.**



### The Jucap Manuscript, 1683

A little over three centuries ago, in 1683, the bishop of Honduras, from Comayagua, sent his representatives throughout western Honduras to determine the linguistic abilities and language use by the priests in his ecclesiastical region. A similar survey had been undertaken 50 years before (AGCA 1632), and the result of that study, shown on map 2, gives a very general indication of the linguistic sub-regions of western Honduras for early 17th century. The region generally was considered to be Lenca-speaking, but as Lyle Campbell (1976), Chapman (1978, 1985: I, 65-66), and others have pointed out, there were perhaps six other Lencan dialects involved, such as Care, Colo, Ulúa, Cerquín, Potón, and Taulepa.

Map 2. Lenca Geography, 16th and 17th Centuries. Lenca settlements (dots) from 1632 church survey (AGI 1632).



The linguistic geography of western Honduras, normally considered Lenca land, is often portrayed as a bit more complicated in some documents of the period. Among the several surveys of language use by priests and other officials of the Church, one of December 1683, probably shows best some unusual details in the normal geographical pattern (AGI 1683, reprinted por Leyva 1991: 171-94). In this document, submitted under the hand of the long-time Bishop of Comayagua, Fray Alonso de Vargas y Abarca, to the president of the Audiencia de Guatemala, the indigenous leaders (*tatoques, tactoques*) within the religious "partidos" of Cururu and Tatumbla reported their answers to questions about the languages used by their priests. These two church jurisdictions were just over the mountains west of the Comayagua Valley and apparently, the bishop was involved in a territorial dispute with Mercedarians over whether the "regular" or "secular" priests would preach in his ecclesiastical region (Black 1989: 158-62). The Mercedarians were among the best at learning indigenous languages but, if they did not master the native language of their area, they could not claim their full ration of chocolate. It was reported, however, that just before the Bishop of Comayagua asked for the report on language ability, the Tencoa and Cururu districts needed more priests certified in indigenous languages and that the Mercedarians in general "had put little care into learning the Indian language" (Black 1989: 158-61).

The 1683 manuscript reveals the residents in each of the 12 settlements surveyed claimed that "pupuluca" was their mother tongue. According to Spaniards of the time, pupuluca, or popoluca, was a generic term that referred to any local non-Nahua native language (Feldman 1986:10). The Mexicans who traveled in Central America used the word *popoluca*, like *chontal* and *jicaque*, to identify their more rustic, less advanced neighbors who did not speak náhuatl (Santamaria 1959: 879; Jiménez Moreno 1978). Many of the men, perhaps most of them, especially the older ones, "knew and understood" *naguate* [náhuatl] and *castellano* [Spanish], but only a very few women knew either of the foreign languages. They spoke only the *lengua materna*.

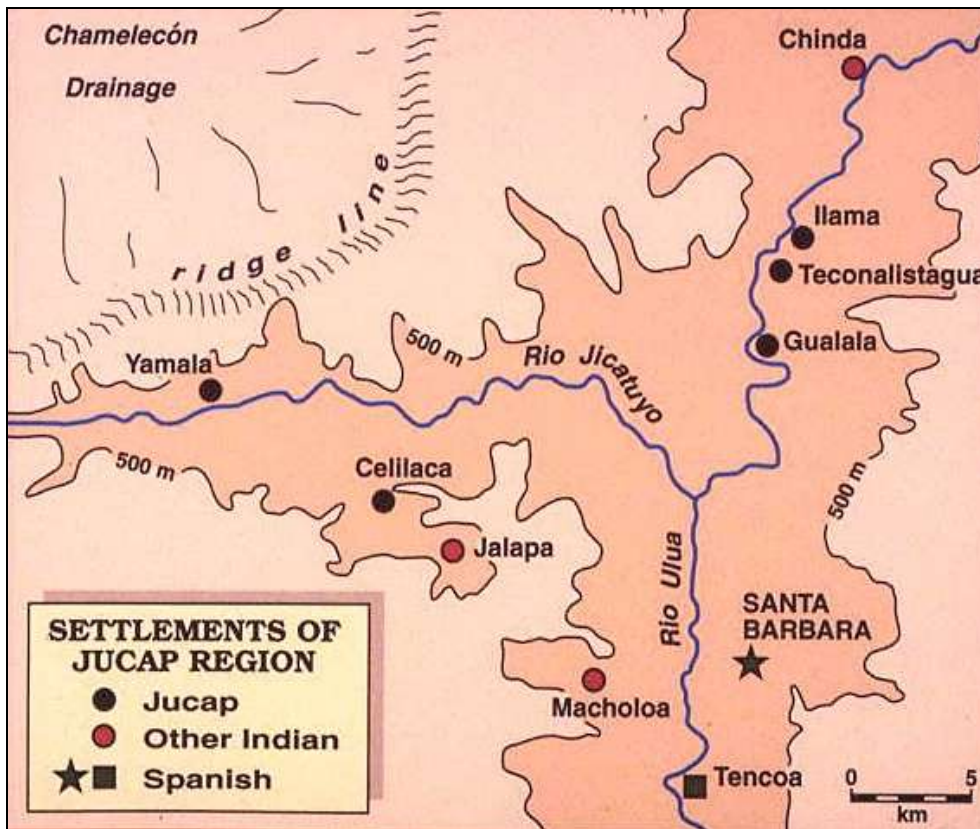
The two church *partidos* were (1) **San Pedro Cururu** [cavecera del partido, and now abandoned] and its five doctrinas: Santiago Tambla [modern Humuya], San Joan Opattoro [Opattoro], Santiago Cacaoterique [Santa Ana], San Caspar Guaxiquiro [Guajiquiro], and San Francisco Similatón [Cabañas]; and (2) **San Pedro Tatumbla** [cabecera, and now abandoned], and its five subject towns: San Joan Quelala [within Jesús de Otoro], Santiago Jurla [Jesús de Otoro], Santa Maria Magdalena [Rauteca, now abandoned], San Miguel Marcala [Marcala], and Asumpción Chinacla [Chinacla].

For the partidos surrounding the Cururu and Tatumbla core, which encompassed much of the modern departamentos of La Paz and northeast Intibucá, the pupuluca-speaking informants were aware that their neighbors spoke different tongues. For example, Aguanqueterique, a bit to the south, was well-known as a zone of Lenca speech, but the languages of Tencoa and Gracias a Dios, while known to be quite different from pupuluca of Cururu, were normally given no specific names. Some informants from Cururu believed náhuatl was spoken there, but those of the Tatumbla district, nearer to the other areas, mentioned the languages of Care, and Putum [Potón]. Both of these languages have been recognized as perhaps dialects of the larger "Lencan" family.

Two intriguing anomalies were mentioned (1) those of Entinbuca [Intibucá], in Gracias a Dios, spoke the pupuluca of San Pedro Cururu and (2) five towns in Tencoa: "Serelica [Celilaca], Yamala, Ylamattepeque [Ilama], Tecunalistaguac [Teconalistagua], Yguala" [*y Guala* (?), or modern Gualala, the "twin" village of Ilama], spoke the language known as "*Jucap*." As for this new language – Jucap -- the informants "Dijeron que no la sauen los dichos padres ni la entienden."

Although the term Jucap appears in only one known document, can a case be made that these five settlements were different from their neighbors and comprised a linguistic enclave within, or on the northern edge of, the greater Lenca realm? Previously, at least according to the 1632 census (AGCA 1632), these towns were listed as "*care*".

Map 3. Settlements of the Jucap Region, 1683.



### Notes on the Location and Population History of the Five Settlements in the Jucap-speaking Region.

At about the time of the bishop's inquiries, a general census of the twice-yearly tribute gathered in the *Provincia de Comayagua* (AGI 1685) gives some indication of the importance of the five Jucap settlements. Celilaca was the largest tribute-paying village in the Tenco district with an estimated population of 274. In numbers of tribute-paying adults, it was the 7th largest indigenous settlement in the country. Ilama was also large, with approximately 177 residents. Yamalá had 81, Teconalstagua had 73, and Gualala was home to 56 people.

Below, in the form of a gazetteer listing, are chronological notes on each settlement.

**Serelica [Viejo Celilac].** Although the settlement appears late in the documentary history of Honduras, it apparently was an important aboriginal site. Throughout most of the early the period of comparable data, Celilaca, as it was normally known, was the largest of the Jucap towns. The original site, now called Viejo Celilac, lies along the río Jalapa, 5 km upstream from its junction with the río Jicatuyo and 6.5 km northwest of San Nicolás, the modern cabecera municipal. The original site is known for the ruins of a colonial church (photo 1). During the 19th century, the inhabitants moved from their original place 5 km to Nueva Celilac, which is to the east and upslope 250 meters. Perhaps the relocation was provoked by a catastrophic flood following a period of prolonged and heavy rainfall produced by a hurricane such as *Fifi* or *Mitch*.

1568: Sililaca, pueblo del distrito Merced, área de Gracias a Dios (Zúñiga C. 1971)

- 1582: Zililaca (Jililaca), 30 tributarios, con Gracias a Dios (Contreras Guevara)
- 1590: Cililaca, 30 indios casados, 12 leguas de Gracias (Valverde)
- 1592: Çelilaca, 107 tributarios, con Tencoa (AGI Cont. 989)
- 1632: Çixilapa, pueblo de indios *care*, con Thencoa (AGCA)
- 1683: Serelica, Jucap pueblo, Tencoa Merced distrito (AGI Guat 184)
- 1685: Sililaca, pueblo of Tencoa (AGI Guat 29)
- 1757: Xililaca, 82 tributarios (AGCA 1758)
- 1762: Xililaca, 66 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1767: Xililaca, 168 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1776: Selilac, 56 tributarios (AGI Guat 568)
- 1783: Selilaca, 89 tributarios (AGCA 1783)
- 1786: Celilac, 39 tributarios (AGCA 1786)
- 1791: Celilac, un pueblo, filiale del curato de Tencoa (AGI 578)
- 1801: San Pedro Selilaca, población: 600, 97 tributarios (AGCA 1803)
- 1801: San Pedro Selilaca, pop. 671, 112 tributarios (AGI 1801)
- 1806: Celilaca, feligresía de 97 tributarios, curato de Tencoa (BAGG 1806)
- 1807: Celilac, población: 465 (AEC)
- 1809: Celilac, población: 492 (AEC)
- 1866: Quebrada Grande, ejidos de Celilac, distrito de Colinas (ANH-TT 1901: 333)
- 1887: población: caserío de 73 (67 indígenas) (Vallejo 1888)
- 2001: Viejo Celilac, población: 90 (INEH 2001)

**Photo 1. Old church at Celilaca Viejo.**



Celilac (Celilaca Nueva)

- 1983: settlement at 14-03'N/88-30'W (mapa: IGN 2560/IV San Nicolás [1968])
- 2001: Nueva Celilac, población: 919 (INEH 2001)

**Yamalá.** Evidently, Yamalá was one of the most important aboriginal settlements in western Honduras at the time of the Conquest. In his repartimiento, Pedro Alvarado (1536a, b) took the place for himself, along with the other major towns. Because of its location on the río Jicatuyo, and because it was probably approached from both the west and the east during early entradas, Yamalá was thought to be in the transition zone between Gracias a Dios and San Pedro and was placed under the jurisdiction of both Spanish centers, in 1536.

Yamalá is the most isolated of the Jucap towns. It is only 20 km from the Ulúa, but its narrow, elongated valley (6 x .5 km) is hidden on both ends by significant canyons. Still, during the rainy season, it can be reached by dugout watercraft. During aboriginal times, its location at the downstream end of the turbulent portion of the río Jicatuyo (below Posta) would have perhaps made it an unusually important site.

- 1536a: Yamal, town "hacia" Caguatexagar, in repartimiento of San Pedro (Alvarado, P.)
- 1536b: Yamala, Indian site in repartimiento of Gracias a Dios (Alvarado, P.)
- 1539: Yamala, town with Gracias a Dios (Montejo 1939: 256)
- 1541: Aramala, Ayamala, pueblo of cacique Mizquanteite, or Mizquantite (*MCH* 2003: X, 41)
- 1582: Yamala, 30 tributarios with Gracias (Contreras Guevara)
- 1590: Yamala, 30 indios casados, 12 leagues from Gracias (Valverde)
- 1592: Yamala, 57 tributarios with Tencoa (AGI Cont. 989)
- 1632: Yamala, pueblo de indios *care*, con Tencoa (AGCA)
- 1683: Yamalá, Jucap pueblo del Tencoa Merced distrito (AGI Guat 184)
- 1685: Yamala, pueblo de Tencoa (AGI Guat 29)
- 1757: Yamala, 20 tributarios (AGCA 1758)
- 1762: Yamala, 33 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1767: Yamala, 84 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1768: Sitisión o La Misión, ejidos de San Juan Yamalá (ANH-TT 1901: 340)
- 1783: Yamala, 38 tributarios (AGCA 1783)
- 1791: Yamala, pueblo filial del curato de Tencoa (AGI 578)
- 1801: San Juan Yamalá, pop. 239, 55 tributarios (AGCA 1803)
- 1801: San Juan Yamalá, pop. 279, 60 tributarios (AGI 1801)
- 1806: Yamalá, feligresía de 55 tributarios, curato de Tencoa (*BAGG* 1806)
- 1807: Yamala, población: 180 (AEC)
- 1809: Yamala, población: 98 (AEC)
- 1838: Yamala, población: 82 (AEC)
- 1847: ejidos del pueblo (ANH-TT 1901: 347)
- 1883: Yamalá y Pacayal, título de tierra, distrito de Colinas (ANH-TT 1901: 326)
- 1983: settlement at 15-01'N/88-26'W
- 1992: Yamalá, caserío en la vega del río Jicatuyo (mapa: IGN 2561/III San José de Colinas [1977])
- 2001: Yamalá, Santa Bárbara, población: 224 (INEH 2001)

**Ylamattepeque [Ilama].** Like Yamalá, Ilama was so important at the Alvarado repartimiento that it needed no description of location. Its site along the middle Ulúa, a major route of early exploration, explains that prominence. The toponym is well-known in náhuatl as "old woman mountain" or "mountain of the old woman," but it is unknown whether it had that name before the Spaniards entered with their Mexican translators. Today it is the largest of the five settlements.

- 1536a: Ilamatepet, pueblo de indios, San Pedro repartimiento (Alvarado, P.)
- 1564: Ylamalespequi, sitio con Merced convento, Gracias a Dios (Zúñiga C. 1971)
- 1582: Ylamatepeque, 30 tributarios, con San Pedro (Contreras Guevara)
- 1590: Ylamatepet, 30 indios casados, 12 leguas de San Pedro (Valverde)
- 1592: Ylamatepeque, 37 tributarios, con with Tencoa (AGI Cont. 989)
- 1632: Ylamatepeque, pueblo de indios *care*, con Thencoa (AGCA)
- 1683: Ylamattepeque, Jucap pueblo, Tencoa Merced distrito (AGI Guat 184)
- 1685: Ylamatepeque, pueblo de Tencoa (AGI Guat 29)
- 1757: Ylamatepeque, 78 tributarios (AGCA 1758)
- 1762: Ylamatepeque, 69 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1767: Ylamatepeque, 189 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1783: Ylamatepeque, 64 tributarios (AGCA 1783)
- 1791: Ilama, un pueblo, filiale del curato de Tencoa (AGI 578)
- 1801: San Christobal Ilamatepeque, pop. 391, 103 tributarios (AGCA 1803)
- 1801: San Christobal Ilamatepeque, pop. 469, 119 tributarios (AGI 1801)
- 1806: Ylamatepeque, feligresía de 103 tributarios, curato de Tencoa (BAGG 1806)
- 1809: Ylamatepeque, población: 310 (AEC)
- 1843: ejidos del pueblo (ANH-TT 1901: 314)
- 1866: Pinal y Limón, ejidos de Ilama (AHN-TT 1901: 329)
- 1887: Ilama, población: pueblo de 980 (648 indígenas) (Vallejo 1888)
- 1983: settlement at 15-04'N/88-13'W (mapa: IGN 2561/II Trinidad [1979])
- 2001: Ilama, Santa Bárbara, población: 1,752 (INEH 2001)

**Tecunalistaguac [Teconalistagua].** At the time of the Alvarado repartimiento this village was located in relationship to Ilama. The town always seemed to be the smallest of the Jucap sites. It was in the process of losing its population, often to nearby towns, when the smallpox epidemic of 1781 passed through the area. That might have been the mechanism to finish the town. Based on the Valverde (1590) description the place can tentatively be located just south of Ilama. Perhaps it is near the archeological site of El Encanto on the eastern vega of the Ulúa (Schortman, Urban, and Smith 1986: 3/4).

- 1536a: Teconalestagua, pueblo de indios "hacia" Ilama, San Pedro repartimiento (Alvarado, P.)
- 1582: Teconalistagua, 14 tributarios, con San Pedro (Contreras Guevara)
- 1590: Teconal y Estagua, 20 indios casados, 14 leguas de San Pedro (Valverde)
- 1592: Teconalistagua, 7 tributarios, jurisdicción de Tencoa (AGI Cont 989)
- 1683: Tecunalistaguac, Jucap pueblo, Tencoa Merced distrito (AGI Guat 184)
- 1685: Teconalistagua, pueblo de Tencoa (AGI Guat 29)
- 1722: Teconalistagua, padrón, 11 casas y población de 28 (AGCA 514-5402)
- 1757: Teconalistagua, 13 tributarios (AGCA 1758)
- 1762: Teconalistagua, 9 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1767: Teconalistagua, 12 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1984: Teconalistagua, sitio abandonado al sur de Ilama, Santa Barbara

**Yguala [Gualala].** Like Ilama, its twin town just downstream the Ulúa, Gualala was recognized by the conquistadors as an important town. At the time of its allocation in the Alvarado repartimiento, Gualala needed no special location. It was well-known along the route along the middle Ulúa.

- 1536a: Gualala, pueblo de indios, San Pedro repartimiento (Alvarado, P.)
- 1549: Gualala, pueblo de 75 tributarios (AGI)
- 1582: Gualala, 20 tributarios, con Gracias a Dios (Contreras Guevara)
- 1590: Gualala, 60 indios casados, 18 leguas de Gracias (Valverde)
- 1592: Gualala, 45 tributarios, con Tencua (AGI Cont. 989)
- 1632: Hualala, pueblo de indios *care*, con Thencoa (AGCA)
- 1683: Gualala, Jucap pueblo de Tencoa Merced distrito (AGI Guat 184)
- 1685: Gualala, pueblo de Tencoa (AGI Guat 29)
- 1757: Gualala, 31 tributarios (AGCA 1758)
- 1762: Gualala, 40 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1767: Gualala, 127 tributarios (AGCA)
- 1783: Gualala, 44 tributarios (AGCA 1783)
- 1791: Gualala, pueblo filiale del curato de Tencoa (AGI 578)
- 1801: Nombre de Jesús Gualala, población: 208, 41 tributarios (AGCA 1803)
- 1801: Gualala, población: 249, 49 tributarios (AGI 1801)
- 1806: Gualala, feligresía de 41 tributarios, curato de Tencoa (BAGG 1806)
- 1809: Gualala, población: 169 (AEC)
- 1838: Guacamaya, ejidos de Gualala (ANH-TT 1901: 313)
- 1887: Gualala, población: pueblo de 499 (206 indígenas) (Vallejo 1888)
- 1983: Gualala, settlement at 15-01'N/88-14'W (mapa: IGN 2561/II Trinidad [1979])
- 2001: Gualala, Santa Bárbara, población: 560 (INEH 2001)

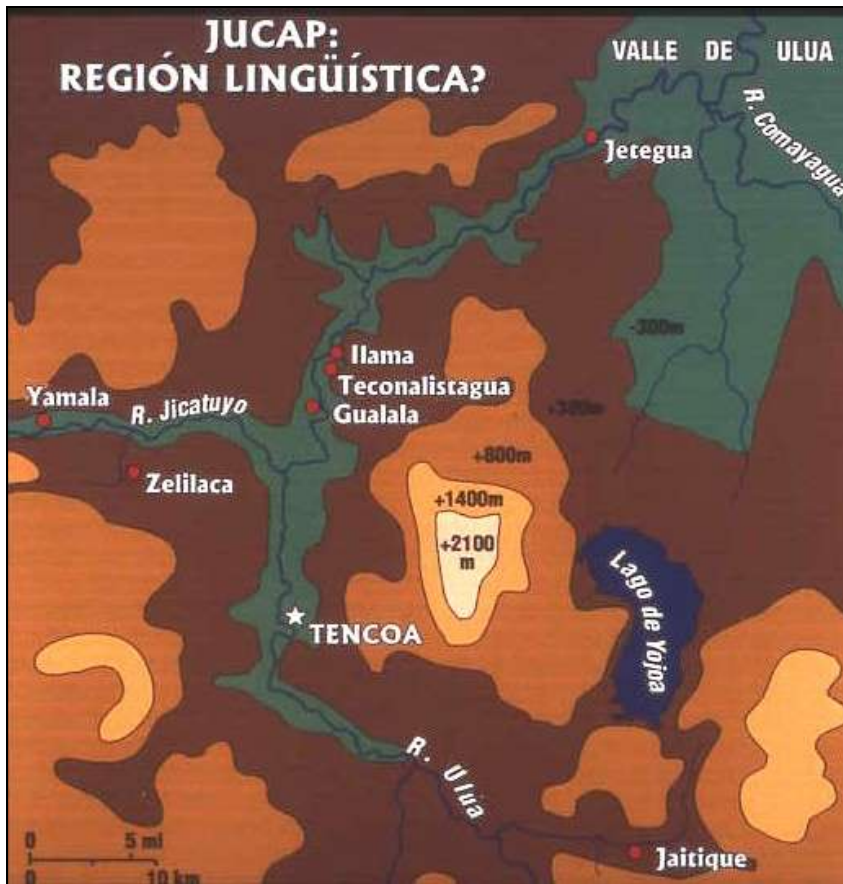
## Evidences of Regional Unity

By definition, a "region" is an area on the surface of the Earth that shares common characteristics. The commonness can come from environmental or cultural features, or a combination of both. If the five Jucap-speaking towns are bound by the cultural factor of language, what other common features might they share? Five major categories of phenomena come to mind. Together, they support the notion that the Jucap towns comprised a linguistic enclave in what today is the departamento of Santa Bárbara.

**Geographical Setting.** The most obvious natural feature that the five Jucap towns share is the riverine habitat of the confluence of the río Jicatuyo and the middle río Ulúa (map 4). All are within 20 kms of where the waters of the Jicatuyo and Ulúa mix, seven kms north of Santa Bárbara capital. All are river towns except Celilac, which is nearby on a major tributary, the río Jalapa (formerly río Celilac). The environment is similar, in elevation, topography, moderate climate, good soils, natural vegetation, availability of water, and seasonality.



Map 4. Aspects of physical geography.



The Jicatuyo, which enters the Ulúa from the west, is by far the greatest tributary of the middle Ulúa. Its large drainage system includes the waters of the ríos Mejojote, Higuito, and Alash, rivers whose headwaters extend beyond Gracias, and toward Copán and Nueva Ocotepique. Along these streams early Spanish explorers conducted their entradas and they later became routes between colonial centers, especially Gracias, Tencoa, and San Pedro.

**Etimology.** What does the word "Jucap" mean? The word was pronounced to a Spanish priest by a Lencan-speaker, **probably**. Thus, the chances of being misunderstood are great, and transcribing and perhaps copying the manuscript again would add to possible mistakes. But still, after searches among possible vocabularies in native Honduran and Mesoamerican languages, one might conclude that the **sound** of *Jucap* is most akin to a mayan word. *Kop* refers to a *valle* (Barrera 1980: 413) and *yu-kab* signifies "temblar la tierra" (p. 481). The Kekchí maya word for canoa is *Jucub*. It therefore is tempting to suggest that the jucap-speakers lived in a valley (which they did) or that they were people who used canoas (which they undoubtedly did), but it would be futile to suggest an exact meaning given all of the ambiguities. At least one has the feeling that a non-Honduran language might be involved and perhaps it was one from a mayoid group.

**Marriage Regions.** Among the padrones of the Archivo General de Centro América in Guatemala City are a few from the Jucap towns during the 18th century. Upon inspection it can

be seen that residents of the five villages have deep social interrelationships. For example, from the padrón de Teconalistagua (AGCA 1722), it can be seen that among the 23 households registered in the town only 11 houses are occupied. Of these, four are comprised of only locally born residents, five have wives from Ilama, and two have females from Gualala. Twelve unoccupied houses are represented by adults who married and live away in Ilama (3), Gualala (2), Yamalá (2), and Zelilaca (1). Non-Jucap pueblos -- Jetegua and Jaitique -- are residences of four adult males from Teconalistagua. In other words, if residents from Teconalistagua do not find local spouses, they normally marry people from other Jucap towns (14 of the 18 contacts). Of the 36 individuals born in Teconalistagua, only 17 remain in town: 13 adults and 4 very young children (pecho). With such out-migration, it is not surprising that the village was abandoned during the late 18th century.

**Distribution/Concentration of Caciques.** Perhaps the most unusual feature unifying some of the Jucap settlements is the concentration of native elites found there at the beginning of the 19th century. After 300 years of incorporation into the Spanish colonial system few indigenous settlements retained a privileged class. However, two lists of *caciques* and claimants (ACGA 1803, AEC 1809) indicate a concentration of elite leaders in three of the Jucap towns. It seems hardly coincidental that of the 29 caciques recognized in the country 27 were in Jucap towns (Table 1). Were these caciques indeed descendants of early Mesoamerican leaders? One possible connection with the past can be seen in a document from 1541 (MCH 2003: X, 6055). Yamalá is mentioned as the settlement led by a *casique*, *Mizquanteite*, who apparently had a Mexican name. The suffix *teite*, at least in a Mesoamerican community in western Nicaragua, referred to a provincial noble (Newson 1987: 56). *Cacique* (also *casique*) is an Arawakan word that early Spaniards used when referring to an indigenous leader or chief. Normally, it was a hereditary position.

**Table1. Native Elite in Honduras and the Jucap Settlements, early 19th century.**

<u>Partido</u>	<u>Settlement</u>	<u>Caciques</u>	<u>Claimants</u>
Comayagua	Chinacla		2
Choluteca	Langue		1
	Tiscagua		1
Tegucigalpa	Curaren		5
	Lepaterique		2
	Ojojona		1
	Urla [Santa Ana]		2
Tencoa	Gualala	1	
	Posta	2	
	Selilaca	24	
	Yamalá	2	
Yoro	Yorito		1
		29	15

Sources: AGCA 1803; AEC 1809.

**Maintenance of Indigenous Traditions.** The zone along the middle Ulúa that includes Gualala and Ilama is one of the few places in western Honduras that still exhibits significant aspects of traditional culture. The annual *guaniasco* exchange between Ilama and Gualala is perhaps an indication of a pre-Spanish event and it remains vibrant. The *junco* plant from which weaving straw is produced is grown here in abundance, and is the center of the weaving industry in Honduras. Along the highway north of Santa Bárbara capital, until Ilama, travelers can buy the straw hats, baskets, and other containers. Gualala is also the focus of an ancient *romería* dedicated to the black Christ of Esquipulas.

**Other Evidence on the Cultural Unity of the Jucap Region.** With much more archeological research in the area more commonality will probably be uncovered. For example, Sheptak (1985: 199), without any suggestion of a date, reported that "una vasija" collected from Gualjoquito, a ruin site between Ilama and Gualala was identical to another "en todos los detalles se encontró el autor en el sitio de Yamalá, al oeste en el Río Jicatuyo." Also, the presence of a linguistic region of the five settlements might be the reason that Chinda, a village only a few kilometers down the Ulúa from Ilama, was not attached to the region of Tencoa in the 1684-85 census of tribute (AGI 1685).

### **Concluding Remarks**

Evidence to support the notion of an exotic cultural enclave in colonial Santa Bárbara, based on a single word, in a single manuscript, and a few unifying factors for five adjacent villages, is far from solid and mostly circumstantial. However, the population arising from these Jicatuyo-Ulúa villages apparently was different from their neighbors. Because all of the Jucap-speaking settlements were in Santa Bárbara and the so-called "Indians of Santa Bárbara" are linguistically unaccounted for we might suggest that they are the same.

While the suspicion is that these settlements are somehow related to one of the high cultures of Mesoamerica, the question of possible origins cannot yet be attempted, except to note the importance of early routes through the region.

Addition research might lead to the discovery that the Jucap region is the area of the northern-most Lenca dialect or that it was actually occupied, or organized, by Mesoamericans. Under any circumstance, at the least, this intriguing problem in regional ethnic history calls out for more research into this apparently anomalous linguistic enclave in colonial Honduras.

### **Note**

Jucap has been noticed previously in the literature. Newson (1986: 21, note 21) mentioned that the language, as spoken in the Tencoa area, was of unknown linguistic affiliation. Herranz (1996: 153-54, 282) suggests that it is a dialect of Lenca.