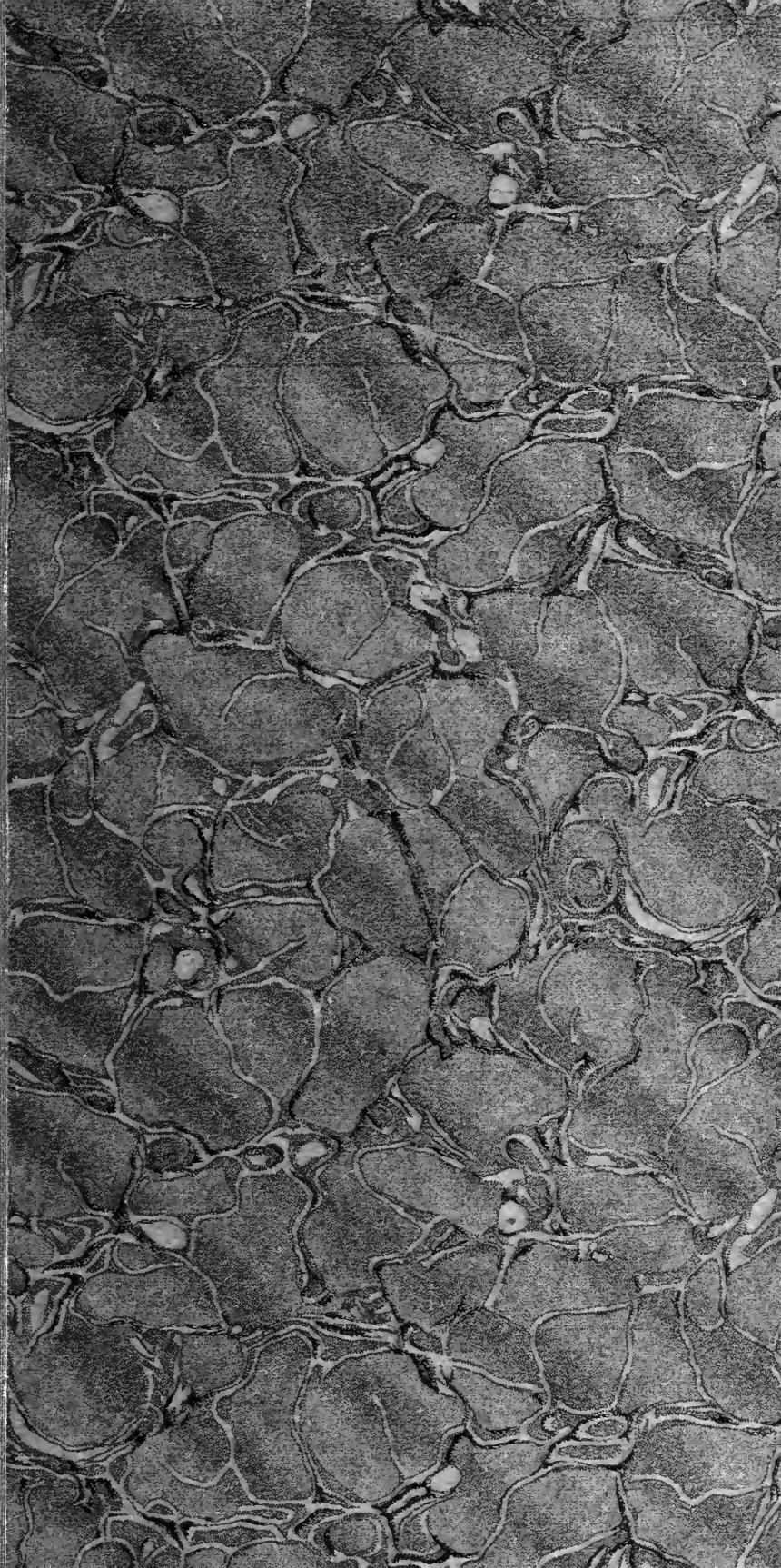


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ON THE

**XINCA INDIANS OF GUATEMALA.**

BY  
*Harrison*

PROF. DANIEL G. BRINTON, M. D.

*1837-1879*

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*(Read before the American Philosophical Society, October 17, 1884.)*

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*On the Language and Ethnologic Position of the Xinca Indians of Guatemala. By Dr. Daniel G. Brinton.*

(Read before the American Philosophical Society, October 17, 1884.)

In the aboriginal ethnology of Guatemala, the affiliations of the Xinca tribe have always remained uncertain. The opinion is expressed by Dr. Stoll (*Zur Ethnographie der Republik Guatemala*, p. 170, Zürich, 1884) that an investigation of their language might throw a new light on the migrations of the ancient inhabitants of that region.

Up to the present time, however, no words of their language have been published, and students have had no means of comparing it with the dialects which surrounded them. I am fortunate enough to be able to supply this deficiency to a moderate extent, and to offer sufficient materials to form some opinion as to this people.

Their precise location was on the Rio de los Esclavos and its branches, which empties into the Pacific ocean, about N. lat. 13° 50', W. long. 90° 25', and westward to the Rio Michatoyat. Their area embraced most of the departments of Santa Rosa and Jutiapa, and may roughly be said to have extended about fifty miles along the coast, and back to the Sierra some sixty miles.

On the west they were bordered by the Pipiles, of Aztec lineage, speaking a Nahuatl dialect not much corrupted; on their north were the Pokomams, who belonged to the Maya stock, and on their east was a colony of Popolucas, a tribe supposed to have been related to the Mixes of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

Their name has been variously spelled, Xinca, Xinka and Sinca. The first given is correct, the initial X having the value of the soft English *sh*, as in *shop*.

According to the *Geografía de las Lenguas Maya-Kiche*, MS. of Dr.

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Berendt, the Xinka is or was spoken in the following towns or villages in the district mentioned :

Atescatempa,	Mustiquipaque,
Atiquipaque,	Nancinta,
Chiquimulilla.	Sinacantan,
Comapa,	Tacuilula,
Guazacapam,	Taxisco,
Ixguatan,	Tepeaco,
Jupiltepeque,	Tescuaco,
Jutiapa,	Tupitepeque.

The first information about the Xincas is contained in the letter of Pedro de Alvarado to Hernan Cortes, dated July 28, 1524.\* He there describes his conquest of their territory in the previous winter. Further particulars of the campaign are given by Juarros, in his *Historia de Guatemala*, Tom. ii, Tratado iv, Cap. xxii, from the MSS. of Fuentes.

From these sources we learn that Alvarado first encountered the Xincas after he had crossed the River Michatoyat and entered the town Atiquipaque (*Atiepar*, in Alvarado's letter, who makes as much havoc with the native names as he did with their armies).

In this town he particularly states that he met another people and a different language from those he had just left ("este es otra lengua y gente por si").

Thence he proceeded to Tacuilula and Taxisco, not encountering determined opposition, as Juarros erroneously says, as Alvarado informs us that the natives received him without fighting, but fled in the night to the forests. After leaving Taxisco, however, they attacked him in force and slew many of his allies.

The chief town of the Xinka would seem to have been either Nancinta (the "*Nacendelan*, pueblo muy grande" of Alvarado's letter) or according to Juarros, Guazacapam. In this vicinity a determined stand was made by the Indians, and they caused the Spaniards and their allies much trouble by digging pitfalls, and by planting the paths with sharpened sticks said to be poisonous. What puzzled the Spaniards was that these natives during their fighting held in their hands small bells with which they made as much noise as possible. Probably they were intended either as charms, or to alarm the enemy.

Juarros adds that these tribes were not conquered by Alvarado's incursion. It required renewed efforts by Don Pedro Portocarrero, in 1526, to bring them under subjection.

On account of their obstinacy, numbers of them were sold as slaves and branded with a hot iron, and hence was derived the Spanish name of the river on which the Xincas lived, *Rio de los Esclavos*, Slave river.

Very few hints as to their social condition are found in the early

\* I quote it as published in the *Biblioteca de autores Españoles*, Vol. xxii, Madrid, 1852.

accounts. Their country is stated to have been populous, their towns built of wood and not of stone, they were skillful with the bow and arrow, and were bold warriors. They formed small independent tribes united in a sort of confederacy, the "cabeza de señorío," or chief clan, being at "the famous town of Guazacapam," and its four dependents or allies are named as,

Nestiquipaque,	Guaimango, and
Chiquimulilla,	Guanagazapa.

The linguistic materials I offer are vocabularies of three dialects of the Xinka.

The first, from Sinacantan, was obtained from a native of that place by the distinguished historian and antiquary, Don Juan Gavarrete, of Guatemala, in 1868. The other two were obtained for him in the same year by Don Sebastian Valdez, Cura of Jutiapa. As according to Dr. Stoll, the originals of these have disappeared, no one knows where, since Señor Gavarrete's death, the present publication seems the more appropriate, presenting as it does the only specimens of the Xinka language known to be in existence. I would not omit to add that they came into my hands, together with other valuable documents, in the collection of the late Dr. C. Hermann Berendt.

*Phonology of the Xinka.*

The language is vocalic, and with few gutturals or harsh palatals, contrasting in this respect with the Cakchiquel and other Maya dialects. The labials, *b*, *f*, and *v*, are absent, although *b* is found in two or three words of the accompanying vocabulary. The linguals are not prominent, the *d* and *th* not appearing at all. The semi-vowels *r* and *l* are convertible in the dialects and occasionally alternate with *n*.

In the vocabularies, the letters have the powers of the Spanish alphabet, except that *x* is pronounced like *sh* in *she*, the *v* is the neutral vowel as in *but*, the *z* is the same as the *s*, and the compounds *esh* and *sch* appear to have the value of the *x* (= *sh*).

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*Vocabulary of the Xinka Language.*

LOCALITY.	<i>Sinacantan.</i>	<i>Jupittepeque.</i>	<i>Jutiapa.</i>
Man,	jurac,	jumu,	jurgaqui.
Woman,	ayala,	aya,	aiya.
Boy,	xurum,	sorone,	soroni.
Father,	tatan,	tataj,	tataj.
Mother,	utan,	utaj,	utac.
Son,	najuum,	nauj,	naguij.
Daughter,	jaya najuun,	— —	naguij
Brother,	xuyam,	keruke,	suyac.
Head,	jamatan,	usajle,	gesalia.
Hair,	mux jumatan,	mosal,	musal.
Eyes,	jurtin,	juritii,	yuratica,

LOCALITY.	<i>Sinacantan.</i>	<i>Jupillepeque.</i>	<i>Jutiapa.</i>
Nose,	jutu narin,	— —	narica.
Nostril.	uona narin,	— —	lurate.
Ear,	maman,	mami,	manca.
Mouth,	xa'jan,	xajac,	sajac.
Tongue,	ejlan,	ela,	eglajac.
Teeth,	jari xa'jan,	— —	sajac.
Throat,	ta'tam,	— —	tarti.
Breast,	ziquim,	tutu,	— —
Arm,	pum,	paja,	paja'.
Hand,	jixi pum,	pu,	puj.
Fingers,	mux,	pere pu,	pere puj.
Belly,	jiguin,	ururi,	ururi.
Leg,	titan,	kegüe,	uapi.
Knee,	jaricomon,	sulna,	— —
Foot,	uapan,	uapi,	guapi.
Town,	machiname,	saguqui,	saguqui.
House,	macu,	— —	macu.
Bed,	a'tac,	alutu,	alutaj.
Hamack,	guaro,	— —	guaro.
Mortar (mill stone),	uiki,	uik,	uic.
Plate,	aulac	aljuat,	augeal.
Jar,	erec,	— —	erec.
Fire,	uray,	uu'ra,	icura'.
Water,	ui,	— —	huy.
Maize,	aima,	— —	ahua.
Ear of maize,	— —	— —	aima.
Bean,	xinac,	sicna,	chidna.
Salt,	tita,	— —	tila.
Hat,	ta'yuc,	— —	tayuc.
Breeches,	xu'nan,	asuna,	asiuna.
Paper,	papooc,	papu,	popoque.
Heaven (sky),	uina,	— —	güigna.
Sun,	pari,	parri,	parri.
Moon,	agua,	— —	ahua.
Star,	xune,	hueso,	güeso.
Day,	pari,	ti parri,	ti parri.
Night,	chamazma,	chijmac,	schugmac.
Wind,	tan,	una,	yeuha.
River,	xanjui,	tire,	ture.
Hill,	naguona,	kerter,	quarter.
Woods,	jaragua,	casagua,	caragua.
Road,	tasma,	talma,	talma.
Cornfield,	uaya'a,	uayaaj,	guaya'.
Earth (land),	narro,	narro,	narro.
Stone,	jixi,	ixc,	gicshe.



LOCALITY.	<i>Sinacantan.</i>	<i>Jupillepeque.</i>	<i>Jutiapa.</i>
Tree,	jutube,	utis,	utu'.
Ceiba,	pa'guac,	— — —	— — —
Banana,	jugua,	— — —	— — —
Jaguar,	ujlay,	uilay,	guilai.
Deer,	tuma,	— — —	tubma.
Jabali,	cargua jaxo,	— — —	— — —
Dog,	pelo,	— — —	— — —
Snake,	jurumuy,	urunugui,	urunugui.
Fish,	seema,	samu,	giamuc.
God,	tiuix,	— — —	— — —
Soul,	terouala,	namasamac,	— — —
Alive,	ixiuac,	ixij,	isig.
Dead,	teroa'ar,	tero',	tero'.
Old,	merc,	mochi,	mochi.
White,	mooti',	moatij,	mougua.
Black,	zumati,	simatij,	sijmatig.
Red,	tenati,	tenajtij,	tenajtig.
Yellow,	meelati',	totojtij,	— — —
Green,	mee,	meyatij,	meyatij.
Blue,	mee,	— — —	— — —
Bright,	minabar,	— — —	— — —
Dark,	zama,	— — —	— — —
Above,	xam,	— — —	— — —
Below,	xama',	— — —	— — —
Yes,	jaa,	— — —	— — —
No,	xim,	— — —	— — —
Good-day,	— — —	— — —	cshi mani maqui con Dios.
Good-night,	— — —	— — —	cshi manusiguai con adios.
Good-bye,	— — —	— — —	coo-par.

## NUMERALS.

1.	ica,	ical,	ical.
2.	ti,	piar,	pia'r.
3.	uala,	ualar,	guarar.
4.	jiria,	iriar,	iriar.
5.	pɔj,	pijar,	pujar.
6.	tacal,	— — —	tacalar.
7.	pujua',	puljar,	pulluar.
8.	tapɔc,	apuj,	apocar.
9.	uxtu',	— — —	gerjsar.
10.	pakil,	— — —	paquilar.

## COMMENTS ON THE VOCABULARY.

- Man. *Jumu*. In the Xicaque language of Honduras *jome* = man, but as this is the only close similarity in a comparison of thirty seven words, I attribute it to accident; *jurac* has a faint resemblance to Cakchiquel *hun uinak*, one man.
- Father. *tataj*, is evidently the universal baby word for father, and its analogies are worthless for tracing affinities. The same is true of *utaj*, mother. Compare Germ. *Vater*, *Mutter*, Cakchiquel *iata*.
- Son. *najuum*, in Pokomchi *akun*, probably an accidental resemblance.
- Daughter. *jaya najuun*, *jaya* evidently from *aya*, woman, female, hence "female child," the combination showing that *najuun* does not mean son, but child, offspring.
- Brother. *xuyam* and *keruke* are evidently wholly different words, and are either used by the different sexes, or apply the one to an elder the other to a younger brother.
- Hair. *mux jumatan* (the last word no doubt an error for *jamatan*, literally "the fingers of the head" or more properly "the extremities, the small branches of the head"). See Fingers. *musal* is apparently a synthesis of *mux*, and *gesalia*, with the same signification. Such compounds indicate that the Xinka is more synthetic than the Maya dialects.
- Nose. *narin*, *narica*, may be the Spanish *nariz*, nose.
- Teeth. The words *xa'jan* and *sajac*, mean mouth. The prefix *jari* seems to mean either bone, or front part, as it re-occurs in *jaricomon*, knee (knee-cap?).
- Breast. *tutu* may be Spanish *teta*, but in the Maya dialects we find Cakchiquel and Quiche *tu*, tit, mamma. Pocoman, *tuj*, Chol., *txu*; *ziquim* may be related to Quiche *tz'am*, mamma.
- Hand. *jixi pum*, probably "the end of the arm." In none of the Maya dialects is there any separate word for "hand." The hand and arm are included in one term, the proper translation of which is "the upper extremity." When it is desired to distinguish between hand and arm, a compound must be formed, or the distinction be left to the hearer. *Jixi* is also given for stone; perhaps the stone point or end of the arrow explains the identity of the expressions.
- Fingers. On *mux*, see teeth. *pere pu*, from *pum*, upper extremity, and a prefix probably signifying ends, tips, or branches.
- Leg. *uapi*, means foot, q. v.
- Knee. See teeth. The two words given evidently mean different things.
- Foot. *uapan*. Comp. Cakchiquel *akan*.
- Town. *machiname*. This is plainly the Pipil *chinamil*, town, with a prefix *ma*.
- Mortar. Span. *piedra de moler*, the hollowed stone on which the women pound the corn.
- Plate, in the original, *comal*, from Nahuatl *comalli*, a shallow earthen dish used to prepare tortillas.

**Maize.** The word *aima* given for maize and ear of maize is found in precisely the same form in Chontal, and in Lenca *ama*. I am inclined to derive it from *ixim* (pronounce *ishim*) the universal word for maize in the Maya family. Later, we have for corn field *uaya'a*, which is close to the Cakchiquel *auan*, corn-field, or *auex*, when the corn is young. If this is correct, it would indicate that the neighboring tribes learned the cultivation of corn from the Maya stock, which is the more significant as it is now the opinion of botanists that the native habitat of the *Zea mais* was in Guatemala where it was developed artificially from the wild *Euchlæna luxurians*. The other word given for maize, *ahua*, is identical with that for "moon." This may possibly refer to an identification of the moon as the goddess of maize. In Chipecway the name of maize is *mandamin*, "the grain, *min*, of the god, *manito*."

**Beans.** *xin'ac* is the Cakchiquel, *tzinak*, Tzendal *txenek*. Evidently the Xincas got their corn and beans first from their neighbors of Maya lineage.

**Salt.** *tita*, from Nahuatl *iztatl*. This article the Xincas learned from their Nahuatl speaking neighbors, the Pipiles.

**Breeches.** All three words are corruptions of the Spanish *calzones*.

**Paper.** The words are corruptions of Span. *papel*.

**Heaven or Sky.** *uina'*, closely allied to Zotzil *uinajel*.

**Sun and Moon.** In pure Maya the general root for sun is *ki*, for moon, *u*.

But in the Kekchi, Pokomchi and Pokomam we have for moon the totally different word *po*. This seems to be the radical of *parri*, sun, in Xinka. Further, in Chañabal and Mam we have for moon *ixa'u*, where the *ix* is probably the feminine prefix, leaving for moon *a'u*, a kin to Xinka *ahua*.

The word *ahua* bears a superficial resemblance to *huy*, water, but a close examination of these tongues does not bear out Dr. Trumbull's theory, of a radical connection between the expressions for sun and water. (See *Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 1875-6, p. 45.)

**Star.** *xune*, allied to Cakchiquel, *tzumil*, star; *hæso* appears to have no connection with Maya dialects.

**Day.** *pari*, the same as sun.

**Night.** *chijm-ac*, Cakchiquel *aka*, night, perhaps with the preposition *chi*, at, "by night," "at night."

**Wind.** *yeuha*, Pokonchi *te'ug*.

**Tree.** *utis*, Tznedal *te*, Chol *tie'*.

**Jaguar.** *uilay*, Pokomchi, *baijlam*.

**Deer.** *tuma*, Chontal, *chima'*.

**Jabali.** *cargua*, from *caragua*, woods, *jazo*, Pokomchi, *aj'k*, hog, wild hog; compare the name of the same animal in Pokomchi, *quiche ajk*, wood-hog.

**Dog.** *pelo*, Spanish, *perro*.

**Soul.** *terouala*, in which *tero* is the adjective "dead."

Alive. *ixij*, Aguacateca, *itzin*, Tzendal, *c'uxul*.

Old. *mochi*, Maya, *noixib*, Tzotzil *mo'ol*.

Colors. The names of all the colors differ totally from the Maya. They appear to have a generic suffix, *ati*, appended to the radicals

<i>mo</i> , white.	<i>teu</i> , red.
<i>sim</i> , black.	<i>tot</i> , yellow.
<i>me</i> , blue or green.	

The word *meelati* for yellow is probably a mistake, and the identification of blue and green is common in the radicals of most Central American tongues as I have elsewhere pointed out (*The Names of the Gods in the Kiche Myths*, *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, 1881).

For comparison I add the Maya radicals for colors, as presented in the Kiche dialect.

<i>zak</i> , white.	<i>cak</i> , red.
<i>gek</i> , black.	<i>gan</i> , yellow.
<i>rax</i> , blue or green.	

It is evident that there is not the slightest relationship, and they are equally remote from the Pipil and Aztec color names.

Numerals. The numerals indicate few and faint similarities to any of the other Central American or Southern Mexican languages with which I have compared them; *ica*, one, is like Mangue *tica*, and the four first may be compared with the Lenca of Honduras as follows:

XINCA.	LENCA
1. <i>ica</i> ,	<i>ita</i> .
2. <i>piar</i> ,	<i>pe</i> .
3. <i>uala</i> ,	<i>lagua</i> .
4. <i>jiria</i> ,	<i>aria</i> .

But I regard this as accidental, as it is not borne out by the remainder of the Lenca vocabulary, in four dialects, which I have brought into comparison.

The termination *ar* in the Jalapa dialect reminds one of the suffix *uual*, indicating turn or repetition, found in the Ixil numerals, a rather pure Maya dialect, thus:

<i>ungvual</i> ,	one time.
<i>cavual</i> ,	two times,
<i>ox ual</i> ,	three times, etc.

God. *tivix*. Gavarrete appends the note to this word: "It does not properly signify God, but image or idol. At present it is applied to the images of the saints." It is probably from the Cakchiquel *tioh*, great, divine, a word employed in a religious sense. This indicates the origin of their ancient cult.

The number five, *puj-ar*, is clearly the noun *puj*, hand, and refers to the five fingers.

Six, *tacal*, appears to be a compound of *ti-ical*, = second, first, *i. e.* the first finger of the second hand. In seven, *puj-ua*, and eight, *a-puj*, the word *puj*, hand, is apparently present.

From this analysis I reach the conclusion that the Xincas belonged to a different linguistic stock from the Mayas or the Pipiles (Nahuas). They were a rude tribe, who first learned the planting of corn and beans from the Cakchiquels or Pocomams, some parts of their religious rites from the same, the use of salt, and some of their village organization from the Pipiles, and portions of their present dress from the Spaniards.

They spoke a vocalic language of monosyllabic radicals, whose themes are chiefly formed by suffixes.

It may be that they were the rude primitive folk who once extended over Guatemala and were forced down to the coast and into the restricted limits where they were first found, by the warlike immigration of the Maya and Nahua races, both of whom distinctly remembered a foreign origin.

We know little of the date of the advent of the Cakchiquels and Pocomams into Guatemala. But a traditional history of it is preserved in the "Annals of the Cakchiquels," written shortly after the Conquest by Francisco Ernantez Arana Xahila, the original MS. of which is in my possession. He informs us that when his ancestors entered Guatemala large tracts of it were uninhabited, and other portions were peopled by a race who, even to the Cakchiquels, appeared as barbarous, and so rude that they called them *chicop*, brutes. They had captured two of these, and learned some words when they entered the lower country. The annalist proceeds :

"They [*i. e.* the ancestors of the Cakchiquels] descended finally to Cholumag and Zuchitan. The language there was very difficult, and only the barbarians themselves could speak that language. We spoke only as we had asked the barbarians Loxpin and Chupichin [their captives], and we said on arriving, '*uaya, uaya, ela opa.*' The barbarians were greatly astonished to hear us speak their language with the natives of Cholumag; they were really frightened at it; but they gave us only good words."

From these few words, the meaning of which I do not know, it is evident the language was of a totally different stock from Maya or Nahuatl. It was soft and vocalic, like the Xinca; and, indeed, *ela*, tongue (language?), is found in the vocabulary. Unfortunately, Xahila does not tell us the signification of the phrase he gives. It was probably some form of friendly salutation.

But it is not worth while to pursue the inquiry further. These suggestions will indicate the interest which attaches to the Xinca tongue and will I hope, inspire some one to obtain more complete information about it.





