

THE PEARCE- SELLARDS *Series*

NUMBER 26

ETHNIC IDENTITIES OF EXTINCT COAHUILTECAN POPULATIONS:
CASE OF THE JUANCA INDIANS

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February, 1977

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ETHNIC IDENTITIES OF EXTINCT COAHUILTECAN POPULATIONS: CASE OF THE JUANCA INDIANS

T. N. Campbell¹

ABSTRACT

The name Juanca is presented for future use as a modern standardized name for a Coahuilteco-speaking, hunting-and-gathering Indian group recorded in Spanish documents as living on the South Texas Plain in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This name appears in at least 18 recognizable variants, six of which—Huacacasa, Juamaca, Juncata, Quana-tago, Tuanca, and Vanca—have at times been mistakenly identified by scholars as names of separate and distinct Coahuiltecan Indian populations. Documents associated with missions San Bernardo (northeastern Coahuila) and San Antonio de Valero (southern Texas) indicate a very high probability that orthographic distortion of the name Juanca by Spanish record keepers has led to an unwarranted increase in the number of names on the generally accepted list of formally named Coahuiltecan Indian populations of north-eastern Mexico and southern Texas. Little was ever recorded about Juanca culture, but documents link them with northwestern Frio County in 1691, leading to the conclusion that their aboriginal territorial range, as determined by the natural food quest, must have covered a fairly large area on the South Texas Plain midway between San Antonio and Eagle Pass, Texas. Evidently already reduced in numbers when first recorded, possibly by European-introduced diseases and the effects of Apache expansion southeastward, a few Juanca individuals and families eventually entered missions San Bernardo and San Antonio de Valero where, after numerous recorded distortions of the group name, their ethnic identity was lost during the last two decades of the eighteenth century.

INTRODUCTION

When Spanish-speaking Europeans first came to the area now embraced by southern Texas and northeastern Mexico, they found it loosely occupied by numerous small groups of Indians who subsisted by hunting, fishing, and wild plant food collecting operations. Each group had a distinctive name and a territorial range sufficiently large for seasonal subsistence needs. The foraging territories seem not to have been mutually exclusive, for territories overlapped and often two or more groups at times shared the same territory (Campbell 1975). So far as is known today, neither the Indians themselves

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nor the early Europeans had a collective name for these peoples, although the earliest written records indicate that many of these groups spoke dialects of the same language. No collective name was in common use until the nineteenth century, when scholars began referring to this aggregate of similarly oriented peoples as Coahuiltecan and to their language as Coahuilteco. Both words are derived from Coahuila, the name of a Spanish colonial province that included lands extending from modern Saltillo, Coahuila, northeastward to the Medina-San Antonio river valley of Texas.

After European settlements began to be established in northeastern Mexico in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the more southerly Coahuiltecan groups began to decline in numbers, the initial decline being largely the result of new diseases brought by Europeans. As European frontier settlements moved slowly northward and northeastward into present-day Texas, there was a simultaneous southward and southeastward expansion of mounted Apache Indians from the southern High Plains. The combination of slow pressures from two opposed directions led to further population decline and territorial displacement among the Coahuiltecan. Fragments of many displaced Coahuiltecan peoples eventually congregated at various Spanish frontier missions of southern Texas and adjoining parts of northeastern Mexico. When these missions were finally phased out by Spaniards in the late eighteenth century, the few surviving Coahuiltecan Indians were absorbed by the local Spanish-speaking populations. All formally named Coahuiltecan Indian groups can now be regarded as extinct.

Those who thus far have given much attention to the numerous and widely distributed Coahuiltecan Indian populations have been principally historians, linguists, cultural anthropologists, and archeologists. All of these specialists have been frustrated by the paucity of information and also by the refractory nature of such information as has been assembled to date. Even though the investigators have not always been explicit, it is evident that a need has been felt for organized presentations of three kinds of basic information: (1) identity information—a reliable list of all formally named Coahuiltecan or presumed Coahuiltecan Indian groups whose separate existence can be successfully demonstrated by documentary evidence; (2) territorial range information—summarizing statements about the location of each named group based primarily on European eyewitness reports prior to displacement of Coahuiltecan groups by Europeans and non-Coahuiltecan Indians; and (3) behavioral information—collation and synthesis of data from all European records that refer to the linguistic and cultural behavior of each named Coahuiltecan group, particularly outside of Spanish mission contexts.

Some progress has been made in acquiring these kinds of basic information, but much remains to be done because not all of the potential sources of information have been searched. Furthermore, known sources of information have sometimes been inadequately or uncritically used. Most of the sources, known or unknown, are available mainly in archives, and relatively few of these sources have ever been published.

The combined work of H. E. Bolton, J. R. Swanton, and F. H. Ruecking, Jr., has resulted in the accumulation of a long list of names for presumed Coahuiltecan Indian groups. Newcomb's (1961) generalized study of Texas Indians was not concerned with the minutiae of ethnic sub-group identities. Even the most cursory examination of a Coahuiltecan master list raises doubts about its reliability. Some names are so much alike that one immediately wonders if perhaps they may represent end products of confusion resulting from both phonetic and orthographic distortion of a single group name. If one examines the written documents in which these similar names were successively recorded by early European observers, this doubt is intensified. The results of one attempt to test this distortion hypothesis are presented here.

THE JUANCA PROBLEM

The effort began when analysis and comparison of certain documents led to the suspicion that a substantial number of recorded names actually refer to one particular ethnic group. These names seem to share certain basic phonetic elements and to refer to a people here designated as Juanca who, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, ranged that part of the South Texas Plain which lies south of the Edwards Plateau. The basic problem was to find enough clarifying information to confirm or deny the suspicion.

Although it was originally longer, the list of "suspects" was reduced to the 18 names given below. Most of these names appear in the earlier Spanish documents, but a few are found only in more recent secondary sources. They are listed below in alphabetic order under three headings which identify localized information sources and the time ranges involved. Plural forms are also given in parentheses if they actually appear in documents.

Vicinity of Frio County, Texas, 1691

Vanca

Mission San Bernardo, near present-day Guerrero northeastern Coahuila, 1708-1722

Juamca

Juanca

Tuamca

Tuanca (Tuancas)

Mission San Antonio de Valero
San Antonio, Texas, 1723-1754

Huacacasa	Juampa
Janca (Jancas)	Juanca (Juancas)
Jancae	Juncata (Juncatas)
Jaucar	Juncataguo
Jaucas	Puncataguo
Juamaca	Quanataguo
Juamca	

Eight names are omitted from the above list because they are specially created modern phonetic variants of names that already appear on the list. These were produced by Ruecking (1954: 14, 17, 22; 1955: 276, 308, 384, 390, 397) and include Hunkata and Xunkata (Juncata), Hwakakasa (Huacacasa), Kwanatagwo (Quanataguo), Twamka and Twampka (Tuamca), Vanka (Vanca), and Xwamaka (Juamaca).

Since most of the 18 names appear in the writings of Bolton, Swanton, and Ruecking, it is pertinent to indicate what each of these investigators has said about ethnic identities. Bolton contributed 11 of these names to the *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, as follows (numbers refer to pages in Hodge 1910, II): Huacacasa (426), Jancas (782), Jancae (426, 1067), Juamaca (426), Juanca (426), Juampa (426), Juncata (426), Juncataguo (426), Quanataguo (333), Tuanca (426), and Vanca (182, 879). He had encountered these names in various unpublished sources, including the baptismal, marriage, and burial records of Mission San Antonio de Valero at San Antonio. For most of the names given in the *Handbook* the question of ethnic identity was ignored. Tuanca and Vanca were identified as representing separate Coahuiltecan groups, and Jancas and Jancae were somewhat uncertainly identified as variants of the name Tonkawa. Bolton, however, did call attention to phonetic similarities in two sets of names, Juamaca and Juampa, Juncata and Juncataguo, although no specific statements were made about probable ethnic identity.

Without presenting any discussion, Swanton (1940: 134-136; 1952: 310-311) included five of the 11 *Handbook* names on a list of Indian groups believed by him to be of Coahuiltecan linguistic affiliation. The five names are Huacacasa, Juamaca, Juncata, Quanataguo, and Tuanca. The remaining six *Handbook* names were not mentioned.

Ruecking followed Swanton, but added one *Handbook* name, Vanca, to Swanton's list of probable Coahuiltecan groups. Ruecking went farther, however, and, on the basis of phonetic similarities in names, attempted to reconcile the *Handbook* names of Bolton with those of Swanton's list. Ruecking equated Juncataguo with Juncata (Ruecking 1954: 14; 1955: 282, 397); Janca, Juanca, and Juampa were equated with Tuanca (Ruecking 1954: 22;

1955: 283, 384). He also equated the name Gincape with Juncata, but this is doubtful because the few Gincape at San Antonio were at Mission San José and did not appear there until 1784, when they arrived with other Indian refugees from the Rio Grande delta region (Hodge 1907, I: 955). The name Gincape itself is probably a variant of Inocoplo, which refers to a group first recorded in central Tamaulipas in the middle eighteenth century (Saldivar 1943: map).

For the sake of completeness, mention should be made of *The Handbook of Texas*, edited by Webb (Vols. I-II, 1952). As nearly all information on Coahuiltecan Indian groups is taken directly from Hodge's *Handbook*, a review of the Texas *Handbook's* Juanca-related entries would be unnecessarily repetitious. The work of Santos (1966-67) should also be mentioned, although he was not primarily concerned with the broader issues of ethnic identification. In an effort to compile a list of Indian groups represented at Mission San Antonio de Valero, Santos made an analysis of the burial records. In the burial register, of the 18 names under consideration here, Santos found only Jaucar and Puncataguo, represented by one individual each. He would have found others if he had similarly analyzed the baptismal and marriage records.

To summarize, it may be said that, so far as ethnic identities are concerned, the combined work of Bolton, Swanton, and Ruecking resulted in association of most of the 18 names with six separate Coahuiltecan groups and the Tonkawa Indians. The principal criterion used for linking two or more names was phonetic similarity, and this criterion was used with commendable caution.

In order to go beyond the phonetically based categories of Bolton, Swanton, and Ruecking it was necessary to have additional primary information on the 18 names in question. The following review of pertinent documentary sources will show that considerable information useful for determining ethnic identities has been overlooked.

REVIEW OF DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

The Vanca of the Frio County Area. The name Vanca is known only from Mazanet's² diary of the Terán de los Ríos expedition from Coahuila to eastern Texas in 1691. Mazanet has recorded a summer encounter (June 10) with individuals from 13 named Indian groups on or near the "rio Jondo," evidently the present-day Frio River. As nearly as can be determined from recorded data on route direction, distances traveled each day, and the streams successively crossed, the locality seems to have been somewhere in the northwestern part of modern Frio County. According to Mazanet, the

²The name Mazanet is also variously rendered as Manzanet, Massanet, and Masanet. Mexican scholars seem to prefer Mazanet or Masanet. Here Mazanet is used except when a cited Spanish source has the form Masanet.

Spaniards had stopped for a day of rest, and during this day their camp was visited by Indians identified as "Sanpanal, Patchal, Papanes, Parchiquis, Paquachiam, Aguapalam, Samampac, Vanca, Payavan, and Patavo." In the evening visitors from three additional groups came to the Spanish camp: "Putaaay, Apayie, and Patsau" (Gómez Canedo 1968: 236; Masanet 1957: 356; English translation, Hatcher 1923: 52). Tobacco and Spanish goods (knives, glass beads, and rosaries) were distributed among these Indians. It cannot be determined if all these groups shared a nearby Indian encampment, but it is evident that they were at least temporarily living in some sort of localized friendly association, possibly for better protection from Apaches of the Edwards Plateau area to the north (Campbell 1975: 1-2, 23-24).

What is particularly important here is to note that in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century Spanish documents of the area under consideration, the initial U and V of words are often indistinguishable when handwritten (Haggard 1941: Appendix C). What Masanet heard and was undoubtedly recording is better rendered as Uanca, which phonetically differs from Juanca only in the absence of the initial [j]. Since the phonetic value of [v] in English does not occur in Spanish, it is confusing to continue using the variant Vanca.

The Juanca of Mission San Bernardo. Documents that refer to Indian populations represented at Mission San Bernardo of northeastern Coahuila are relatively rare. So far as is known, the baptismal, marriage, and burial records of San Bernardo have not survived. This mission was officially established in 1703, but the earliest document recording the presence of Juanca Indians there is apparently the report of Garza Falcón, written in 1734, which lists resident Indian families. Only one individual, Martín, is identified as of "Nación juanca." His wife, María Sapopa, is not ethnically identified (Garza Falcón 1734: 22).

The next reference to Juanca is in the Diego Ximénes report of 1762, nearly 60 years after the mission was founded. The Ximénes report gives the names of nine Indian groups known at San Bernardo, and it clearly indicates that many other Indian groups were also represented there in small numbers. This report survives in two versions (Ximénes 1762a, 1762b), one of which contains the name "Juamca," the other the name "Tuamca." There is nothing extraordinary about this apparent orthographic inconsistency, since in the Spanish handwriting of the time the principal distinction between J and T, both lower case and capital, is the crossbar identifying the T (Haggard 1941: Appendix C). Any absent-minded writer could cross a J or fail to cross a T, and the difficulty of distinguishing handwritten M from N is always a troublesome matter.

The next document is the Rodríguez report of 1772, which includes a census of the Indians at Mission San Bernardo taken that year (Rodríguez 1772: 65-73). In this census some 238 Indian individuals representing at least 22 different ethnic groups are identified. One woman, Onofra, is identified as a "Juanca" Indian.

Then in 1777 Juan Agustín Morfi visited Mission San Bernardo and commented on its resident Indians in his diary (Morfi 1856: 442; 1935: 203). Apparently Morfi did not see the Rodríguez census list noted above, since he did not record the name Juanca. His statement about the mission Indians is an almost *verbatim* copy of a passage from the Ximénes report of 1762. He altered Tuamca to Tuanca, however. In the middle nineteenth century Orozco y Berra (1864: 303) copied from Morfi, and nearly all later writers who refer to the San Bernardo Indians have copied or followed either Morfi or Orozco y Berra. Hence the name Tuanca, given by Morfi and copied by Orozco y Berra, has through frequent usage come to be "accepted" as the name of a distinctive Coahuiltecan group at Mission San Bernardo, whereas the primary records show three additional name variants—Juamca, Juanca, and Tuamca. Weddle (1968: 272) is the first twentieth century writer to make use of the Ximénes report and note the name Tuamca. Sherzer has pointed out to me that ". . . Spanish cannot have the sound M before the sound K. In fact, in most languages, including Amerindian languages, N and not M is found before K. Thus the spelling Juamca or Tuamca would be quite strange and, I think, suspicious" (Joel Sherzer, typescript comments, April 5, 1976). The evidence cited leaves little doubt that the four name variants now known from records pertaining to Mission San Bernardo all refer to a single population unit, one that was initially referred to as "Juanca."

What is left dangling is the approximate date when some of the Juanca first entered Mission San Bernardo. This probably occurred sometime after 1708, because Espinosa (1708: 37) did not list them among the Indian groups who had appeared there. The evidence, such as it is, suggests that the Juanca population, which may not have been very large when first recorded in 1691, had declined to a low level before any of them moved into Mission San Bernardo.

It now appears reasonable to conclude that the Vanca/Uanca of the Frio County area, reported by Mazanet in 1691, are the same people indicated by the variants Juamca/Juanca/Tuamca/Tuanca recorded in documents pertaining to Mission San Bernardo in Coahuila. This is also reinforced by the fact that of the 12 groups associated with the Vanca/Uanca in Mazanet's diary, three were recorded at San Bernardo as late as 1772. As will be noted later, seven of the Frio County groups were represented at Mission San Antonio de Valero, where a few Juanca individuals also took up residence.

The Juanca at Mission San Antonio de Valero. Mission San Antonio de Valero of San Antonio, Texas, was established in 1718 and was in existence as a formal mission for some 75 years. Most of its basic records—baptisms, marriages, and burials—have survived and are fairly well preserved (Mission Records n.d.). Since many individual Indians are repeatedly identified by ethnic group names in the various mission registers, it is possible to draw certain conclusions about recorded names and their orthographic variants. The first point that becomes evident in studying the Valero records is that multiple variants of the same ethnic group name are quite common. Such variations may be explained to some extent. At Valero there was a heavy turnover in missionary personnel through the years. Such biographical data as have been summarized seem to indicate that perhaps as much as 60 percent of the missionaries spent less than two years at Valero, and the majority of these actually spent less than one year (Habig 1968: 234-256; 1973; Schmitt 1901). Any new missionary needed time to learn his mission Indian populations, which themselves were constantly changing because of a high death rate and because recruits from new ethnic groups arrived from time to time. In such a fluid situation it is not very surprising to find orthographic variations, especially for Indian groups that were represented by only a few survivors. Although it is difficult to demonstrate, some missionaries, when in doubt about the spelling of an ethnic group name new to them, must have referred to earlier registry entries for a precedent. In such instances they may have misread the handwritten names. The main task today is to reduce the confusion in names as much as possible without at the same time creating new errors.

Although Bolton obtained many ethnic group names from the Valero records, he did not systematically attempt to correlate group names with the personal names of Indians who resided at Valero. He was, however, fairly thorough in listing name variants and did not alter the record by suppressing ethnic group names that were notably different. As neither Swanton nor Ruecking analyzed the Valero records, they were unable to go very far beyond Bolton. So far as the documents are concerned, it may be said that the baptismal, marriage, and burial records of Mission San Antonio de Valero constitute a court of last resort for reviewing the ethnic identities of many Indian population remnants. These records are not good enough to resolve all the identity problems, but they do help to reduce the number of such problems. The best information comes from identifiable individuals whose ethnic group names are frequently recorded.

Bolton (in Hodge 1910, II: 426) claimed to have seen the name Juamaca in the Valero records. In my search for ethnic group names in these same records I failed to find the name Juamaca; and Santos (1966-67), although he searched burial records only, also failed to note its presence. It seems reasonable to conclude that Juamaca is the result of a modern error either in transcription or in printing. It is most likely to be a slight distortion of the name Juamca, which occurs in the Valero records. This absence from the

Valero records leaves no real basis for referring to Juamaca as the name of a separate Coahuiltecan group, as has been done by both Swanton and Ruecking.

The names Jancas and Jancae were also reported by Bolton (in Hodge 1910, II: 426, 782, 1067) as occurring in the records of San Antonio de Valero, and he considered them as probable variants of the name Tonkawa. Both names are evidently Bolton's readings of what I have read as Jaucas and Jaucar, names which were recorded between the years 1728 and 1738. Santos (1966-67: 158) also found Jaucar in his search of the burial records. In the Valero records no recognizable Tonkawa name variant can be found until the year 1759, when six "Tancague" were identified in seven baptismal and two burial records, all dated between November 25 and December 8. No other Tonkawa name variants occur thereafter. It thus seems unlikely that Bolton's Jancas and Jancae are variants of the name Tonkawa. A better case can be made for identifying them, however the names are read, as variants of the name Juanca.

Bolton (in Hodge 1910, II: 333) likewise reported the name Quanataguo as occurring in the Valero records, and he specifically cited Burial No. 87 (1728). It turns out that the ethnic group name in this entry is very faint because of moisture damage to the document. The less legible first half of the name can be read either as "Quana" or as "Juana." It does not matter too much which way it is read, since both Quanataguo and Juanataguo are similar to the name Juncataguo, which occurs 11 times in the Valero records; and another similar name, Puncataguo, occurs four times. The name Quanataguo (or Juanataguo) is connected with a woman named Ana whose daughter, Rosa, was buried in 1728. Unfortunately, the same Ana (there were other Anas at this mission) cannot be identified in other entries. It is persuasive to note, however, that between 1728 and 1736 there are at least 10 records of the names Juncataguo and Puncataguo. Prior to Bolton the name Quanataguo does not seem to have been recorded anywhere. On such slender evidence it is difficult to maintain that Quanataguo is acceptable as the name of a specific group of Coahuiltecan Indians, despite its unquestioned acceptance by Bolton, Swanton, and Ruecking.

The next names to be examined include Juampa, Juanca (Juancas), Juncataguo, Juncata (Juncatas), and Puncataguo. In considering these five names, the most informative dossier is that of a woman recorded by the Spanish personal name Alfonsa (sometimes Ildefonsa) and also by the native personal name Taumama. From a total of 19 separate Valero entries between the years 1730 and 1754 it can be deduced that Alfonsa was married three times and had at least nine children. Her first husband was a Payaya, and her second and third husbands were both Siaguan. Her ethnic affiliation is variously specified as Juampa (twice), Juanca (twice), Juncataguo (10 times), and Puncataguo (three times). In two entries no ethnic name is recorded. This can be supplemented by the dossier of a second woman, Clara de la Candelaria, who is identified in two entries (1730 and 1737) as Juncatas

and Juncataguo. Clara was married to a Payaya. These two dossiers, when combined, provide the basis for arguing that the five names in question—Juampa, Juanca, Juncata, Juncataguo, and Puncataguo—are variants of the name Juanca, here suggested as a standard name for a single Coahuiltecan group. It seems more cogent to regard these five names as variants of Juanca than to think of two contemporaneous individuals (Alfonsa and Clara) as being mistakenly identified with at least four separate ethnic groups, only one of which, Juanca, can be validated by documents other than the Valero registers. The name Puncataguo is probably a misreading by a missionary of earlier entries recorded as Juncataguo. Puncataguo evidently was not noted by Bolton, but I found it in the Valero registers, and so did Santos (1966-67: 158).

For the three remaining names—Huacacasa, Jaucar, and Jaucas—the evidence is less satisfactory. It is reasonably clear that Huacacasa and Jaucas are identical, since both names are associated with the same individual, Lorenzo, when his daughter, Nicolasa, was baptized (1727) and when she was buried (1728). Jaucas and Jaucar have already been noted as probably being the names which Bolton read as Jancas and Jancae. In relating Jaucar and Jaucas to Juanca and its more obvious variants, one is faced with the suppression of M or N and the transposition of UA to AU. As both changes quite frequently occur in the name variants of other groups recorded at Valero, this presents no great difficulty. It also helps to be able to say that the names Huacacasa, Jaucar, and Jaucas are not known to occur in primary documents other than those of Mission San Antonio de Valero. It is for these various reasons that the three names are here interpreted as variants of Juanca.

The variants recorded by Mazanet and by documents connected with Mission San Bernardo are so similar to many of the Valero names that not much doubt remains that reference is being made to one original ethnic group, the Juanca Indians. It is also pertinent to add that of the 12 groups associated with the Vanca/Uanca of Mazanet's diary of 1691, seven are represented in the basic records of Mission San Antonio de Valero between the years 1723 and 1754.

In brief, substantial evidence can be cited in support of the contention that the 18 listed names all refer to a single ethnic unit, for which Juanca is proposed as a standard name to be used hereafter. It is suggested that the names Huacacasa, Juamaca, Juncata, Quanataguo, Tuanca, and Vanca no longer be accepted as valid names for separate and distinct Coahuiltecan Indian groups, and that the names Janca (Jancas) and Jancae be dissociated from Tonkawa.

THE JUANCA INDIANS: A SUMMARY

If the foregoing interpretation of Juanca identity is acceptable, then it may be said that this obscure Indian group can be traced through scattered

records covering a period of about 80 years. In 1691 the Juanca were first recorded somewhere in present Frio County, Texas, under the name Vanca or Uanca. Thereafter they were recorded under a variety of phonetically similar names at two Spanish missions, San Bernardo in northeastern Coahuila and San Antonio de Valero in southern Texas. At San Bernardo the record extends from some unspecifiable date after 1708 up to the year 1772, and the last identifiable Juanca individual was Onofra, whose husband was Bernardo, a Pastaloca, and whose son, Damassio, according to the mission patrilineal descent system, was not a Juanca but a Pastaloca. The last Juanca individual at San Antonio de Valero was also a woman, Alfonsa (or Ildefonsa), whose name disappears from the Valero records after 1754. Since none of her three successive husbands was a Juanca, none of her children was recorded as Juanca. Thus, such evidence as is available leads to the conclusion that during the period of record, that is, 1691-1772, the Juanca population was very small and its identity was lost through population decline at two Spanish missions during the second half of the eighteenth century.

Since the Juanca were observed and recorded in a native context only once, as the Vanca or Uanca of 1691, few positive statements can be made about their original territorial range. The report of 1691 appears to place them in the vicinity of modern Frio County, Texas. At that time the Juanca were associated with 12 other named groups, some of which are known from additional reports to have ranged the same general area, and from this it may be inferred that at least in the latter part of the seventeenth century Frio County was included in the Juanca's customary range. The Frio County observation locality is approximately 90 miles from Mission San Bernardo, which some of the Juanca entered after 1708, and about 60 miles from Mission San Antonio de Valero, where a few Juanca were recorded after 1723. This conclusion also seems to be supported by the fact that no recognizable variant of the name Juanca appears in earlier documents (1673-1690) that pertain to northeastern Coahuila and the adjacent part of Texas. It may be noted further that there is no indication of Juanca individuals at any time entering other missions of northeastern Mexico or southern Texas. All this suggests that the early Juanca territorial range probably was a fairly large area on the South Texas Plain about midway between San Antonio and Eagle Pass.

So far as is now known, no specifically designated samples of Juanca speech were ever recorded, and for this reason none of the names here considered to be synonyms of Juanca appears on checklists of North American Indian tribes and languages, such as that recently published by Landar (1973). "Juanca" is, presumably, the name by which the Juanca people customarily identified themselves. As initially recorded by Spaniards, it seems to fall within the phonemic range of Coahuilteco as determined by Troike (1959: 16-44) from an analysis of Coahuilteco as represented in García's *Manual* (1760). Swanton (1940: 23), in his Coahuilteco-English vocabulary, lists the word "xuānkam" ("to be ashamed, to have shame"),

which may be related to the name "Juanca," but this relationship does not appear to be demonstrable at present.

Taumama, the native name of Alfonsa, the thrice-married Juanca woman at Mission San Antonio de Valero, is probably a Coahuilteco word. Swanton (1940: 51) lists "mama" as one of three Coahuilteco words for "father." In 1691 Mazanet gave a native name for the "rio Jondo" or Frio River, Guanapajao (or Guanapajac), saying that "en lengua de los indios se llama Guanapajao" (Gómez Canedo 1968: 236). Presumably "los indios" refers to the 13 Indian groups he identified and not to Indian guides who accompanied the Spanish party, but the guides also seem to have been Coahuilteco-speakers. Although Mazanet, who had learned to speak Coahuilteco, sometimes gave Spanish translations of native place names, he did not do so in this instance.

The argument for Coahuiltecan linguistic affiliation of the Juanca has to be based mainly on the following indirect evidence: (1) Frio County, where the Juanca were observed under native conditions, lies within an area where Coahuilteco seems to have been the only language commonly spoken until the arrival of the Athapaskan-speaking Apaches; (2) one of the groups associated with the Juanca in the Frio County area, the Pacuache, is listed among speakers of Coahuilteco named in the *Manual* of Bartholomé García (1760: title page); and (3) according to several missionaries, most of the Indian groups that initially entered the missions of San Bernardo and San Antonio de Valero spoke dialects of the same language, the language now known as Coahuilteco (García 1760: iv-v; Gómez Canedo 1968: 240).

All that can be safely said about Juanca culture has to do with mode of subsistence, which can be inferred from the Mazanet report of 1691 (Mazanet 1957). Since no early Indian groups between San Antonio and Eagle Pass were ever seen practicing horticulture, it seems acceptable to characterize the Juanca as a hunting-and-gathering people. Mazanet said nothing about specific subsistence activities, but his 1691 diary mentions a number of animals and plants that could have been sources of Juanca foods. Along the route between the Nueces and Medina rivers Mazanet several times reported bison as being abundant, and deer were mentioned when the Spanish party was near the Medina. Nearly every perennial stream crossed was said to contain many fish, which Mazanet said the Spaniards frequently caught and ate. Among the plants having edible products, Mazanet repeatedly mentioned mesquites, pecans ("nogales"), live oaks ("encinos"), mulberries ("altos morales"), and grapes (Gómez Canedo 1968: 235-237). Unless new documents can be found, this is about all that can be said today about the Juanca Indians.

CONCLUSIONS

The case of the Juanca appears to be an informative example of what could happen to the identifying name of a small hunting-and-gathering population in the written records that cover the period of its decline and disappearance. When such a population had been reduced in numbers and the remnants had entered one or more European-style Christian missions, the mission record keepers became increasingly careless in the written rendition of the ethnic group name. The name variants were further distorted by mission inspectors and miscellaneous travelers, and sometimes even by later writers. Eventually an assortment of similar names became "fossilized" in the various written records.

When ethnohistorians study such recorded group names, they are initially confused by this cumulative distortion. If there are many name variants and some of these are badly distorted, it is likely that several ethnic groups will be distinguished when actually only one population unit is involved. As in the case of the Juanca, it is sometimes possible to reduce the number of discrete ethnic groups believed to have lived in a given area by clearing up some of the confusion in recorded names. The deciding factor in such successes is usually the quantity and quality of the written records available for use.

In such studies a critical issue is whether sufficient evidence can be found to show that phonetically similar group names in the records of one particular mission are synonymous name variants that refer to a single original ethnic group. What is most needed is external corroborative evidence, such as the appearance of similar names in pre-mission documents, or in the records of another mission, preferably both, as in the case of the Juanca. If a series of similar names occurs in the records of one mission only, this is a severe handicap and reduces the argument to phonetic evaluation. One situation can cause unusual difficulty: when two demonstrably different ethnic groups had similar names. Fortunately, only a few cases of this are known.

The stance taken here is that one must seriously grapple with these identity problems in order to reduce the confusion as much as possible. Any method or approach is justifiable if it gives verifiable results. It does not seem very courageous to throw up the hands and claim that each ethnic Humpty Dumpty is now so badly fragmented that it cannot be put together again. And for those who would like to have a hand in this ethnic identity game, there is an exhilaration that comes from "killing off" entire Indian populations that never existed except in the minds of previous ethnohistorians.

This study indicates that general reference works containing information on Coahuiltecan Indian groups should be used with some degree of caution. This is particularly true of Hodge's *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, upon which so many other reference works are based. This remark should not be taken as a sweeping indictment of all Coahuiltecan entries in the *Handbook*. But here and there, in many of them, there are misleading statements that reflect either incomplete use or misinterpretation of the primary sources. When reference volumes are used, if there is any doubt, the best procedure is to go back to the primary documents and re-evaluate the evidence.

Acknowledgments. The following individuals, whose names are listed alphabetically, read the manuscript critically and made suggestions which I think led to considerable improvement: Tommy Jo Campbell, Jan Z. Dymond, Thomas R. Hester, W. W. Newcomb, Joel F. Sherzer, and Dee Ann Story. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

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Abbreviations used:

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AGN— Archivo General de la Nación, México

BAE-B—Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin. Washington.

BTHCA—Barker Texas History Center Archives, The University of Texas at Austin

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