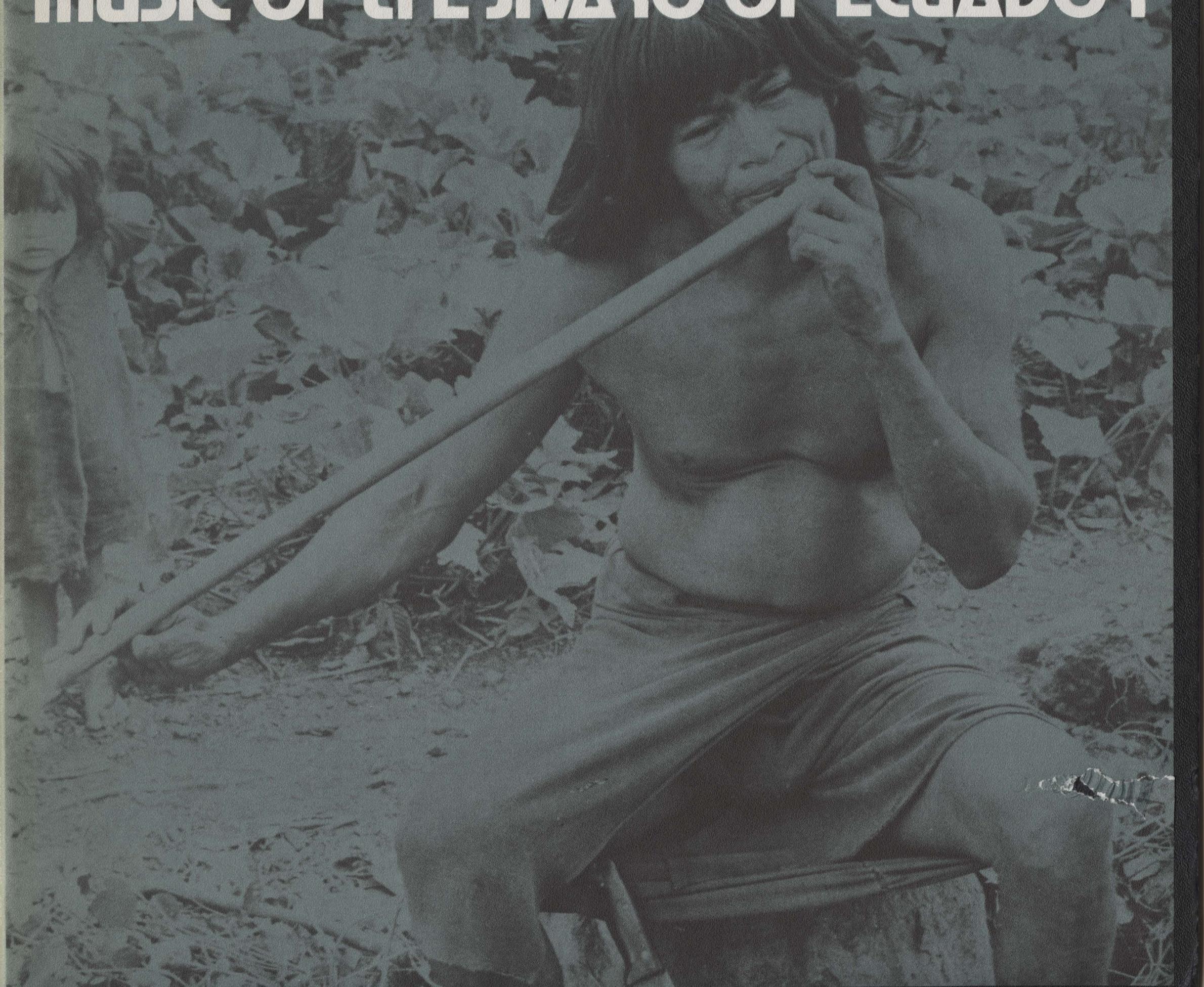


RECORDED AND EDITED BY MICHAEL J. HARNER



ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4386

MUSIC OF THE JIVARO OF ECUADOR



ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4386

Side 1

- Band 1. Social Dance Song (Female Solo)
- Band 2. Social Dance Singing (Female Chorus)
- Band 3. Social Dance Singing (Female Chorus)
- Band 4. Social Dance (Women Singing, Belt Rattles, Drum & Flute)
- Band 5. Song of KUNGI, The Flute Bird (Flute Solo)
- Band 6. Social Dance Flute Music (Chorus)
- Band 7. Social Dance Singing (Male and Female Duet)
- Band 8. Shaman's Song To Call Back Magical Darts (Musical Bow Solo)
- Band 9. Love Song (Musical Bow Solo)
- Band 10. Song Sung To Enemies About To Attack (Two-String Violin Solo)

Side 2

- Band 1. Lullaby (Female Solo)
- Band 2. Bamboo (Trumpet Solo)
- Band 3. Calling An Enemy's ARUTAM Soul (Log Signal)
- Band 4. Head Shrinking Song (Male Solo)
- Band 5. TSANTSA (Shrunken Head) Dance (Men's Voices, Women's Chorus Singing and Belt Rattles)
- Band 6. Shaman Curing A Bewitched Patient (Male Solo, Whistling, Singing, Sucking and Leaf "Rattle")
- Band 7. Trail Conversation Between Two Acquaintances (Males)
- Band 8. Trail Greeting Between Two Strangers (Males)
- Band 9. Invitation To Kill (Two Males, Whispering)
- Band 10. Visiting A Home (Visitor Calls Warning)

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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RECORDED AND EDITED BY
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ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4386

MUSIC OF THE JÍVARO OF ECUADOR

Recorded and edited by Michael J. Harner, Committee on Anthropology, Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research, New York City; in eastern Ecuador in 1956 and 1957.

Introduction and Notes on the Recordings by
Michael J. Harner

The rugged forested hills of the eastern slopes of the Andes have long constituted one of the last great sanctuaries of American Indian groups relatively independent of white domination. Of these groups, probably none has been historically more prominent than the Jívaro (hee-va-ro) Indians (*untsuri shuata*) of eastern Ecuador who at present number approximately 15,000 persons. For almost four centuries the Jívaro successfully resisted attempts by would-be conquerors to settle permanently in their territory despite the fact that they occupied one of the richest regions of placer gold deposits in South America. The most outstanding episode in this long history of resistance undoubtedly was the massive Jívaro uprising of 1599 against the Spanish conquistadores which reportedly resulted in the death of an estimated 30,000 Spaniards in one week and the permanent expulsion of the Spanish Crown from the tribal territory. Only in the present century has there been a gradual penetration of the Jívaro country by missionaries, settlers and soldiers. This penetration has particularly accelerated during the past twenty years with the construction of jungle airstrips which facilitate economical colonization of the region by whites from the Andean highlands. Such developments have been rapidly altering Jívaro economy, society and culture. The recordings in this album were made in 1956-57, before such changes had affected the entire tribe, and the remarks which follow refer to the traditional Jívaro culture as it still persisted at that time in the uncolonized eastern interior.

One of the most distinctive features of Jívaro culture is the tendency for the households to be scattered widely in the jungle, each one a fortified and autonomous unit exploiting the immediate forest for game, and producing vegetal food in its own garden. Land is abundant, the main garden crop, manioc, is very productive, and famine is unknown. A typical household is composed of a man, two wives, their children, and often a son-in-law. The women do most of the garden work, while the men fell trees to make new clearings for gardens and do the hunting and the weaving of garments. The men are also responsible for household defense.

Despite the abundance of natural resources and food, serious interpersonal conflicts abound in Jívaro society, and the life of these people is characterized by continual feuding and great social insecurity. There is a complete absence of corporate kin groups or of formal political organization to adjudicate disputes and to maintain "law and order." Real or imagined wrongs against oneself or one's immediate family lead to equivalent re-



Woman preparing the mash for manioc beer (from *The Jívaro: People of the Sacred Waterfalls*, by Michael J. Harner. © 1972 by Michael J. Harner. Reproduced by permission of Doubleday & Company, Inc.

taliation and escalating feuds. Common offenses demanding retaliatory sanctions in the form of assassination include wife-stealing and homicide, whether ascribed to hostile shamanism or witchcraft, believed or real poisoning of food, or physical violence.

Great competition exists to obtain females for wives since they do almost all of the agricultural work, including the arduous and time-consuming weeding. This competition is accentuated by the desire of Jívaro men to gain reputations as generous hosts through lavishing manioc beer and food on visitors and by giving feasts and parties. To produce the quantities of food and beer necessary for such hospitality, at least two wives are considered essential.

Impromptu parties are a continual feature of Jívaro life. Although the houses are widely scattered, people are constantly dropping in on one another and staying overnight. Such occasions typically involve the consumption of remarkable quantities of manioc beer and participation in social dancing and singing into the early hours of morning. Visits and parties often involve flirtations and clandestine sexual adventures with other men's wives, with the result that the "morning after" frequently is accompanied by a great deal of suppressed resentment against the visitors.

Considerable ambivalence exists in the attitude toward one's neighbors since they are both the source of fun and conflict.

A high percentage of the Jivaro are shamans, persons who are believed to be capable of curing and causing disease through supernatural means. To cure or bewitch, the Jivaro shaman takes a hallucinogenic brew, natema (known elsewhere as ayahuasca or yagé) made from the Banisteriopsis vine in order to get into a trance and enlist the assistance of his spirit helpers. Witchcraft-induced illness is believed to be due to the intrusion of one of these spirit helpers (tsentsak) into the body of the patient, and the curing shaman must suck it out in order that his patient may survive. Since illness is largely ascribed to witchcraft, death is commonly attributed to a particular bewitching shaman who then is singled out for assassination by the immediate relatives of the deceased. This is one of the ways in which feuds commonly get started.

While assassination for specific wrongs is prevalent in the Jivaro tribe, warfare is normally conducted only against other tribes, i.e., groups that "speak differently," having a different dialect or language. Warfare most commonly takes place against the Achuara, a Jivaroan group east of the Jivaro, but in the past has taken place against the Jivaroan Huambisa and Aguaruna to the south as well as against non-Jivaroan neighbors. The chief objective of warfare is to take heads in order to return home and be able to host special ritual feasts. The head trophies are modified to form the famous tsantsa or "shrunken heads." Actually only the skin of the heads is reduced, the skull and its contents being thrown away. By boiling and the use of hot rocks and sand, the skin is reduced and modeled to produce a trophy slightly larger than a man's fist. The religious reasons for this practice include the belief that the victim's "avenging soul" (muisak) is captured within the head and thus its supernatural power can be taken home and utilized by female members of the killer's household. The ritual feasts that the head-taker consequently gives are the largest known to the Jivaro, and involve huge quantities of food, beer and days of dancing at the head-taker's house. It provides him with an opportunity not only to demonstrate his valor against enemy certain to be shared in common with his neighbors but also to show his hospitality and goodwill towards his guests. It is the high point of Jivaro social life.

The preoccupation of the Jivaro with the imminence of violent death and with the means of avoiding it is accompanied by certain religious beliefs which provide the individual with a sense of security against being murdered. To secure immunity from death, the Jivaro male goes to a sacred waterfall where he engages in a vision quest, often aided by ingesting another hallucinogenic drug, maikua. If successful, he encounters an arutam ("ancient specter") and later the ancestral soul that produced the vision enters his body to provide him with supernatural power (kakarma) which provides immunity from violent death as well as a general increase in the strength of the soul-acquirer. Women sometimes acquire arutam souls, but since they are not as frequently the objects of assassination, the need is not felt to be as urgent. Women, in fact, primarily focus their religious activity on the successful production of their garden crops by appealing for help to a female crop fairy, Nunjuí.

While there are obviously many aspects of Jivaro life which may seem unappealing to the Westerner, there are many subtle aspects of their life style which seem highly rewarding to them and to one who has lived among them. First, perhaps, is the sense of freedom and individualism which permeates existence. Completely absent is any oppressive political structure or class stratification. Connected with this is the integrated autonomy of the household as a food-producing unit with

only slight dependence on the outside world (e.g., machetes, guns and ammunition obtained through native trading partnerships). Finally, the life is exciting, dramatic and anything but dull, with a rich supernatural world encountered directly with the aid of hallucinogens, and with danger, in the form of enemies, constantly felt to be somehow lurking in the forest. Freedom has its price, but the Jivaro have long been willing to die rather than to give it up.

NOTES ON THE RECORDINGS

Side I Band 1.

Social dance song solo sung by a woman to her male partner. Social dancing, which takes place primarily at informal and frequent beer-drinking parties, often extends late into the night. Each woman faces her own male partner, dancing in a rhythmic, hopping step, while singing traditional or impromptu lyrics. Here the woman challenges her partner to keep awake and dancing.

"My little brother,
I am not sleepy,
I cannot sleep.
And you can only
Have the slumber of a demon."

(it is believed that demons cannot sleep.)

Side I Band 2.

Social dance song sung by women in chorus. Here they are singing for their own amusement and are not dancing.

"I asked her, "Where are you going."
'I go deep into the eastern forest.'
That is what she told me.
By the way,
Another truth is that a stone can talk!"

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Side I Band 3.

Woman's social dance song to a male admirer who is visiting for the first time. It ends with an invitation sung by women in chorus.

"Why are you so near to me?
For they will come after us.
This other one
Who came very close
Caused me to boil.
It would be better if you
Got farther away.
And what is your name?
I'm going to be sleeping here on a bed.

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Side I Band 4.

Social dance songs accompanied by flute music, beating on a monkey skin snare drum, and the rattle of the snail shell dance belts worn by the women. The following are the songs being sung during the dancing:

- 1) "I am going to dance like a woman of the whites.
But let us dance till dawn,
Because for a long time
I have wanted to dance with you."

- 2) "I am like a chuwí (a bird).
Be careful,
Don't touch me,
Because I will make your babies sick."

(Here a comparison is jokingly being made to the belief that parents of a newborn infant must avoid eating the chuwí.)

- 3) This is a song with a meaningless text. The words are the same as in "2", which it accompanies, but they are not in any context. This is often done for dancing.

Side I Band 5.

Song of kungi, the flute bird, played on a cane flute. The bird receives its name because it sounds like a flute; and the tune played, in turn, is an imitation of the song of the bird. Often this song is played on the flute in the evening to lull the rest of the household to sleep.

Side I Band 6.

Men playing flutes together as a kind of jam session. The tune is that of woman's social dance song of which the words are:

"I am dancing with a parakeet.
It is a beautiful one
And has a very broad tail.
And I also have a parakeet myself.
And it's the same size as a parakeet."

(Men are commonly metaphorically referred to as birds in songs because of their beautiful feather headresses and ornaments. Such adornment is more elaborate for men than for women.)

Side I Band 7.

Man and woman singing social dance songs to each other. Such singing is typically done in a somewhat contrapuntal manner with each partner having his or her own lyrics.

Man's song:

"I am like a parrot,
A parrot that came out of the swamps.
And someone told me
That this parrot knows how to talk.
But I'm not accustomed to talk
Like a certain other parrot."

(The male singer is implying that he is handsome like a parrot and that he also does not gossip about his lovers.)

Woman's song:

"Little brother,
Why do you tell me
Of someone else asking
Why I have such a fragrance?
And little mother,
Someone else told me
The same thing.
But you have a fragrance
That I do not possess."

Side I Band 8.

Solo on a musical bow. Played by a shaman to get back his spirit helpers (tsentsak).

Side I Band 9.

Solo on musical bow. Played at sunset by a father to magically help his seventeen year-old son find a girl to love. The musical bow is often played at dusk by a young man to cause his lover to think of him no matter how distant she may be.

Solo on two-string violin. This is the violin version (for amusement) of a song a man may use to challenge his enemies when he knows that they have surrounded his house and are about to attack. The violin used by the Jivaro is traded to them by another tribe to the north, the Quechua-speaking Canelos or Alama, who make them in imitation of Spanish design. The Jivaro remove one of the three strings to achieve the sound they prefer.

When this song is sung, the words are as follows:

"I am like an anaconda.
No one can get near my house
Because there is a lake around it.
I am a jaguar,
The bravest that is.
And no one
Can get near my house."

(The "lake" here is a metaphor for the surrounding garden of manioc plants which are believed capable of sucking the blood of enemies.)

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Side II Band 1.

Lullaby, sommonly sung by an older sister of the infant while the mother is away, working in the garden.

"Why are you crying?
Goodness!
Why are you crying so?
I want to work in the garden.
Tu, chi,
Tu, chi.

Now you sleep,
Now you sleep.
Tu, chi.
Now you sleep.
Tu, chi.

Tu, chi,
Tu, chi,
Tu, chi.

Side II Band 1 (cont.)

Now he sleeps.
Tu chi.
Mother, come soon.
Tu, chi.

Come soon for the baby.
Come soon for the baby.
It is crying, it is crying.

Mother, come soon.
I am waking it.
Come soon.

Mother, come soon.
I am waking it.
Come soon.

(Purrs to calm baby repeated)

Side II Band 2.

Bamboo trumpet solo. Played around dawn by a man when he feels powerful.

Side II Band 3.

Log signal drum solo being played by a man attempting to capture an enemy's arutam soul. The particular rhythm employed is peculiar to this procedure, with a wooden mallet being beaten on the tongue of the hollowed log and a stick being beaten on the underside of the lower exterior of the drum. The player is under the influence of the hallucinogenic nateña drink made from the Banisteriopsis vine. The drumming takes place at night when the enemy's arutam may be wandering while he sleeps. The log signal drum is beaten in a different rhythm to sound the alarm in case of an attack or a death in the household.

Side II Band 4.

Solo sung by a man when shrinking the skin of an enemy's head while making a tsantsa:

"Now it is boiling.
Now it is ready to be taken out.
It is ready for the stones to be put into it.
Now I am putting water in again."

Side II Band 5.

Dance at a feast celebrating the taking of an enemy's head and making it into a tsantsa. While the men repeat a ritual chant which does not use ordinary words, the women sing a background chorus whose words are as follows:

"Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
(Name of victim) tells me
(Name of victim) tells me
We are going to greet the dawn playing.
(Name of victim) tells me
(Name of victim) tells me
We are going to greet the dawn."

And they taught me previously,
That I cannot sleep easily,
And I will meet the dawn together with (name of
(victim)).
And don't you sleep!
And don't you sleep!
For now it is dawning, for now it is dawning."

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Side II Band 6.

Solo by a shaman curing a patient of illness caused by a bewitching shaman. The curing shaman, in a trance state induced by the hallucinogenic nateña, first whistles to alert his spirit helpers, tsentsak, and then sings to them to assist him in sucking out the tsentsak of the bewitcher from the patient's body. He also reaffirms his own strength, including his identification with the powerful Tsungi, the mythological first Jivaro shaman.



Man playing violin obtained by trade from Quechua-speaking Indians in the north who make them in imitation of Western models. European-type clothing is also highly desired and traded long distances. (photo courtesy Michael J. Harner)

(Whistles)

"I am like Tsungi.
Therefore I know how to suck.
I, I, I, I.

I always suck out tsentsak easily.

(repetition; then he asks for an infusion made by steeping green tobacco leaves in water. He swallows this to feed his tsentsak. An onlooker then exhorts him to have strength.)

Now I have sucked it out.
You will not die.
I will make you well.

There are my tsentsak
Which are ocelots.
But this jaguar
Lives below the water,
And this jaguar
Never gets sick ever.
Thus also am I.

I have a beautiful container
And in it are my tsentsak,
And with this
I have the courage and strength
To suck out (tsentsak).
I, I, I, I.

There is a boa constrictor of the forest
Which never gets sick
And which doesn't have feeling
Like a human body.
And thus also am I
In order to suck out tsentsak."

(Announces: "Now I have taken it out")

Side II Band 7.

Conversation between two men, who already know each other, meeting on a trail. The men are not angry with each other but simply speaking in the style designed to impress travelers and visitors of one's own personal arutam soul power. Within the family, and after visitors have been received, conversation is in an ordinary, moderate style.

In this recording, as usual in this style, the two men speak in a kind of counterpoint, with the conversations running simultaneously.

Man "A":

"I am coming to report that they have killed below the Yaupi River. And cut the neck. And took the head to make a tsantsa to carry to the Chiguasa neighborhood. And afterwards they are going to sell this tsantsa to the Peruvians. And then they will buy a Winchester. And you also must help me kill there, since it is not far away from here. We only have to go three sleeps to get there."

Man "B":

"Very good. Tomorrow let us go in several groups. In case we kill there, let us do likewise and sell the heads to the Peruvians."

Side II Band 8.

Enermartin or the greeting engaged in by two male strangers encountering one another on a trail. This is much more formalized than the trail conversation between two men who know each other (MT 17) and employs certain ritual phrases whose meaning is usually unknown to the conversers. Each is attempting to impress the other with his arutam soul power while at the same time the local member of the pair is attempting to interrogate the stranger as to his business in the neighborhood. The pair alternates their active and passive roles in the conversation, while the one who is carrying the brunt of the exchange at any particular time stamps back and forth and thrusts his shotgun or lance in rhythm towards the other man. A similar style is employed between members of a war party prior to leaving on an expedition to take heads. This particular excerpt is the tail end of a twenty minute conversation of this type.

Man "A":

"I cannot remain in my house. I must come to visit you."

Man "B":

"It is good. Your father always came to visit us. But it appears that you are unknown to us. Very good. You have finally come. We shall converse later."

(Much of the exchange consists of ritual phrases with obscure meaning.)

Side II Band 9.

Secret invitation to kill. The organization of a raid to assassinate an enemy within the tribe is carried out in utmost secrecy in order to have the advantage of surprise. The invitation to participate in such intra-tribal killing is whispered by a visitor to his host out of earshot of the women of the household, who are at the other end of the house. The children are chased away so that they will not overhear the conversation.

Man "A": "I will come tomorrow to tell you (the details) because it is going to be easy to get our enemy."

Man "B": "How do you know it is going to be easy?"

Man "A": "I sent someone to spy."

Man "B": "Very good. Then tomorrow I will await you to learn more. Are you acquainted with the trail

to get to and return from this man?"

Man "A": "No, I don't know the trail. But a man from that locality will come to guide us."

Man "B": "Good. Then tomorrow I will wait to hear from you. But take care not to tell anyone."

Man "A": "Right."

Side II Band 10.

Arrival and departure from a house. The visitor gives the traditional warning yell as he approaches the house so that its residents will know that he comes in peace. When the visitor enters the house, his host emphasizes his good will toward him by ordering his wife to serve the guest beer. By ordering her to hurry, he shows the esteem in which he holds the visitor. In this case, however, his wife is a bit old and crotchety, and talks back to him.

Arriving

The warning yells by the approaching visitor.

Visitor: "I come to you."

Host: "Come on in."

Host to wife: "Hurry, hurry with the beer. Whenever a man walks far he must be tired. Get the beer ready fast."

Wife: "Yes, right now. I cannot hurry faster."

Host to wife: "Hurry, hurry, hurry."

Wife: "I am coming with the beer now."

Departing (after a lengthy conversation of over an hour)

Visitor: "Friend, very good, I go now."

Host: "When I want to, I'll come to visit you."

Visitor to host's wife and host's mother: "Sister, stay well. Mother, stay well."

Women: "Right."

Visitor: "Good."

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