

Jivaro

Data source: eHRAF

Secondary source

Entered by Emily Pitek, Human Relations Area Files

** Data Source entry, prepared based on data sourced from an external project.*

** Secondary Source entry, prepared from a literature review by a Ph.D. RA*

Entry tags: South American Religions, Religious Group

The Jivaro reside in the foothills of the Andes, around the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border. At the time this entry focuses on (1920) the Jivaro have had contact with outsiders for centuries but maintain political and cultural independence, while also resisting the conversion efforts of Catholic missionaries. The Jivaro live in dispersed, autonomous groups. These groups are not large, village communities, rather, they are comprised of a single extended family (led by a patriarch) that occupies a communal house. No formal, official political office is present. Older men and women who are knowledgeable, experienced, and possess magical power, are called *whuéa* and *oháha*, respectively. These individual lead ceremonies at feasts, but are not full-time religious practitioners or powerful leaders. *Whuéa* are the physicians of the community, using sorcery and divination to cure illness. The Jivaro religion is animistic in nature: almost everything possesses a spirit, and no distinction is made between human souls and the souls inhabiting plants, animals, inanimate objects, and environmental features. There is a concept of reincarnation, with the soul changing from one existence to another, but these beliefs are not linked to a formal system of thought or aspects of morality. The Jivaro have two words for describing spirits: *wakáni* (spirit of the deceased) and *iguánchi* (souls of people who were particularly feared or powerful during life, such as medicine-men and sorcerers). Also present are two deities known as Earth-mother *Nungüi* and her husband *Shakaëma*. These beings are considered the mother and father of the Jivaro, and are associated with crops and cultivation. The Jivaro religion does not exist within a distinct sphere of life. Rather, it is bound up with the function of society as a whole. Therefore, this entry considers the religious group to be coterminous with society itself.



Date Range: 1895 CE - 1929 CE

Region: Jivaro of Ecuador and Peru

Region tags: South America, Ecuador, Peru

Jivaro of the Ecuadorian-Peruvian border area, ca. 1920

Status of Participants:

✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. *World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research*.
- Source 2: Murdock, G.P. & Wilson, S.F. (Jul., 1972). Settlement patterns and community organization: *Cross-Cultural Codes 3. Ethnology*, 11(3), 254-295.
- Source 3: Tuden, A. & Marshall, C. (Oct., 1972). Political organization: *Cross-cultural codes 4. Ethnology*, 11(4), 436-464.

– Source 1: Murdock, G.P. (1967). *Ethnographic Atlas*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

– Source 1 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=sd09-001>

– Source 1 Description: Karsten, Rafael. 1935. "Head-Hunters Of Western Amazonas: The Life And Culture Of The Jibaro Indians Of Eastern Ecuador And Peru." *Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum*. Helsingfors: Centraltryckeriet.

– Source 2 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=sd09-013>

– Source 2 Description: Rivet, Paul. 1908. "Jivaro Indians: Geographic, Historical And Ethnographic Research." *L'Anthropologie*. Paris: Masson et Cie.

– Source 3 URL: <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=sd09-000>

– Source 3 Description: Beierle, John. 2006. "Culture Summary: Jivaro." New Haven, Conn.: HRAF.

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: "Although the Jibaros have been in contact with the whites for many centuries, and although repeated attempts have been made to 'civilize' them, they have been able to maintain both their political and their cultural independence up to the present time. Only in their material culture can European influence be traced, although to a very limited extent. Their intellectual culture and their social customs have remained unaltered. Thus, for instance, the custom of head-hunting, which has made the Jibaros especially famous, is still practised in its original form among most tribes, being connected with rites and ceremonies of exceptional interest. Similarly, in their religion they are, as far as I can see, quite unaffected by Christian ideas, notwithstanding the assiduous efforts of the Catholic missionaries to convert them" (Karsten, 1935:3).



Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: SCCS Variable 1649, Frequency of Internal Warfare (resolved rating), has an original code of 0, indicating no resolved rating. Additionally, SCCS Variable 1654, Pacification, indicates that the Jivaro were not pacified for all of part of the twenty-five-year time period. Source of information: Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004.



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: SCCS Variable 1650, Frequency of External Warfare (resolved rating), has an original code of 0, indicating no resolved rating. Additionally, SCCS Variable 1654, Pacification, indicates that the Jivaro were not pacified for all of part of the twenty-five-year time period. Source of information: Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004.

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence indicating the Jivaro would recruit new members.

Does the religion have official political support

– Yes

Notes: For the Jivaro, religion is not a distinct aspect of life. Rather, it is bound up with the functioning of society as a whole. Consequently, this entry considers the religious group to be coterminous with the society at large. In this sense, the religion is considered to have official political support.

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– No

Notes: There is no full-time religious practitioner, such as a priest.

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– No

Notes: According to Murdock and Wilson (1972; Column 6: Large or impressive structures), "there are no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings".

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– No

Notes: There is neither a head of the polity (the socio-political unit is the family, led by a patriarch) nor head of the religion (within communities, medicine men use sorcery to function as physicians, and elder men lead ceremonies, but neither of these individuals would be considered to be a full-time religious practitioner such as a shaman or priest).

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– No

Notes: According to SCCS Variable 1740, levels of political hierarchy, no formal political office is present among the Jivaro (Lang, 1998; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for a conception of apostasy among the Jivaro.

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Estimated population, numeric: 10000

Notes: "Since some of the regions inhabited by the Jibaros are geographically unexplored and the different tribes live very scattered, their total number is difficult to estimate. In our days they may well number 10 to 15 thousand souls. We know however that the Jibaros were formerly far more numerous than they are at present and that they are rapidly diminishing owing to contact with the whites and still more owing to the wars of extermination which the different tribes are constantly waging upon each other" (Karsten, 1935:1-2).

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– No

Notes: "The Jíbaro all have a series of ceremonies which are as yet little known, but the character of which is almost always clearly religious. They are all regulated by personages incorrectly called priests by the missionaries. To my knowledge there is no individual in Jíbaro society who corresponds to the role of priest in ours. I have already said that the [Jivaro] communicates directly with the iguanchi. The so-called priest is an old man who, because of his great experience, is very well acquainted with the traditions and customs of his ancestors, and whose role is limited to giving the concoction of tobacco to be drunk, to direct the singing, dancing and details of the ceremonies, and to distribute the food among the participants. This function is by no means the privilege of certain families, and does not give a special rank to those who exercise it. In exchange for his good services, the old man simply receives from the one who pays the expenses of the feast a triple ration of food, a dog, an itipi, a blowgun, and sometimes even an ax. An old woman called Ujaja plays an analogous role with regard to the women" (Rivet, 1908:241-242). Medicine men are also present, but are physicians of communities, not priests (see Karsten, 1935:399-403).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of scriptures among the Jivaro.

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– No

Notes: According to Murdock and Wilson (1972; Column 6: Large or impressive structures), "there are no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings".

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– No

Notes: According to Murdock and Wilson (1972; Column 6: Large or impressive structures), "there are

no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings".

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: "The Indians have two words for denoting a spirit or demon: wakáni and iguánchi. The word wakáni may be translated into 'soul' or 'shadow'. Human souls disembodied temporarily, for instance in dreams, or permanently in death, are called wakáni, as is also the shadow reflected in water or on the ground, or in a mirror" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: "Neither the Jibaros proper nor the Canelos Indians in their native state know of any special resting-place for disembodied souls after death, though both tribes certainly have a firm belief in the continued existence of the soul after its separation from the body" (Karsten, 1935:455-456).



Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: "During the first days and weeks after that separation the soul remains in the neighbourhood of its former material abode; hence food and drink is put out for it on the grave for some time. But soon the soul definitively leaves all connection with the body and leads an independent existence: it may transmigrate into earthly objects, into animals, plants, hills and high mountains, rivers, lakes, etc. The dark and dense forest is the favourite haunt of many disembodied spirits, others soar towards the sky and become active in striking natural phenomena, whereas others find no definite resting-place at all but hover about in the air and on the earth as evil demons" (Karsten, 1935:455-456).

Reincarnation in this world:

– Yes

Notes: "There appears to be no essential difference between the human souls and souls inhabiting animals, plants, and inanimate objects; the latter too seem to be conceived simply as disembodied human souls. Or more strictly speaking, the Jibaros know only one chief kind of spirit or soul which inhabit men, animals, and inanimate objects of nature, or lead an entirely independent existence as evil demons, and which may occasionally exchange one form of existence for another. The Jibaros thus, like most other South American Indians, are familiar with the idea of the transmigration and reincarnation of souls, but this doctrine is not worked into a regular system of thought and is still less associated with moral ideas of any kind" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

↳ In animal/plant form:

– Yes

Notes: "The Jibaros believe that the souls of dead women are particularly incarnated in the owl" (Karsten, 1935: 373-378). "During the first days and weeks after that separation the soul remains in the neighbourhood of its former material abode; hence food and drink is put out for it on the grave for some time. But soon the soul definitively leaves all connection with the body and leads an independent existence: it may transmigrate into earthly objects, into animals, plants, hills and high mountains, rivers, lakes, etc" (Karsten, 1935:455-456).

↳ Reincarnation linked to notion of life-transcending causality (e.g. karma):

– No

Notes: "The Jibaros thus, like most other South American Indians, are familiar with the idea of the transmigration and reincarnation of souls, but this doctrine is not worked into a regular system of thought and is still less associated with moral ideas of any kind" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: "The mode of burying, as I said, may vary. The Jibaros practise all modes of burial except cremation, but earth-burial and platform burial are those most common" (Karsten, 1935:456-458).

↳ Cremation:

– No

Notes: "The mode of burying, as I said, may vary. The Jibaros practise all modes of burial except cremation, but earth-burial and platform burial are those most common" (Karsten, 1935:456-458).

↳ Mummification:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of mummification.

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: "Ordinary earth burial is frequently resorted to when women and children die. The burial place may be within the house or outside it, and it is curious that in the former case the rest of the family members continue living there. A grave is for instance simply dug in a corner of the house, or close to one of the walls, and the corpse is placed there in a lying posture, whereupon the grave is filled in and the ground levelled so that it resembles the rest of the earthen floor" (Karsten, 1935:459-460).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– Yes

Notes: "One custom, commonly practised, is that the dead Indian is placed in a sitting posture upon a kutánga, a small bench used by the Jibaros, and tied to one of the central pillars of the house, leaning his head upon his hands. He is not, however, left in this way above the earth, but under it, a pit being dug in the ground close to the pillar sufficiently large to take the corpse in this sitting position. Thereupon the grave is filled in and the ground levelled, so that the food and manioc-beer, the lance, a basket, and some other things which the deceased is supposed to need in the other world can be placed there" (Karsten, 1935:456-458).

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– Yes

Notes: "Ordinary earth burial is frequently resorted to when women and children die. The burial place may be within the house or outside it, and it is curious that in the former case the rest of the family members continue living there. A grave is for instance simply dug in a corner of the house, or close to one of the walls, and the corpse is placed there in a lying posture, whereupon the grave is filled in and the ground levelled so that it resembles the rest of the earthen floor" (Karsten, 1935:459-460).

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cannibalism.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of feeding corpses to animals.

↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse :

– Yes [specify]: platform burial

Notes: "Still more common among the Jibaros is platform burial. In this case the corpse is generally placed in a sort of coffin consisting of a hollowed trunk, which is then closed by means of pieces of bark and vines. The coffin is then placed upon a frame on high poles in the middle of the house. Naturally the house is abandoned as in the first case" (Karsten, 1935:459-460).

– Yes [specify]: Against house

Notes: "I have also heard of other modes of disposing of a dead family-father. Thus at Rio Zamora, I was told, a dead Jibaro man had been simply wrapped in a bast mat and tied to the door post of his house in a standing posture, with his face turned towards the interior of the house as if had been entering the same" (Karsten, 1935:459-460).

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of co-sacrifices in burials.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

Notes: "One custom, commonly practised, is that the dead Indian is placed in a sitting posture upon a *kutánga*, a small bench used by the Jibaros, and tied to one of the central pillars of the house, leaning his head upon his hands. He is not, however, left in this way above the earth, but under it, a pit being dug in the ground close to the pillar sufficiently large to take the corpse in this sitting position. Thereupon the grave is filled in and the ground levelled, so that the food and manioc-beer, the lance, a basket, and some other things which the deceased is supposed to need in the other world can be placed there" (Karsten, 1935:456-458).

↳ Personal effects:

– Yes

↳ Valuable items:

– No

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more information regarding formal burial among the Jivaro.

↳ As cenotaphs:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cenotaphs.

↳ Family tomb-crypt:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of family tomb-crypts.

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– Yes

Notes: "Still more common among the Jibaros is platform burial. In this case the corpse is generally placed in a sort of coffin consisting of a hollowed trunk, which is then closed by means of pieces of bark and vines. The coffin is then placed upon a frame on high poles in the middle of the house. Naturally the house is abandoned as in the first case...Ordinary earth burial is frequently resorted to when women and children die. The burial place may be within the house or outside it, and it is curious that in the former case the rest of the family members continue living there. A grave is for instance simply dug in a corner of the house, or close to one of the walls, and the corpse is placed there in a lying posture, whereupon the grave is filled in and the ground levelled so that it resembles the rest of the earthen floor" (Karsten, 1935:459-460).

↳ Other formal burial type:

– Yes [specify]: Outside near house

Notes: "In other cases dead women are buried outside, at a short distance from the house. A primitive shelter of thatch is made, resting upon four poles, and the corpse is buried under this" (Karsten, 1935:460).

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: "... the Jibaros believe in two higher deities, the Earth-mother Nungüi and her husband Shakaëma, revered as the mother and father of the whole Jibaro culture...But besides these, the religious ideas and practices of the Jibaros have reference to supernatural beings of a lower order, to souls, spirits and demons of which there are many different classes" (Karsten, 1935:371-373).

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– No

Notes: "The Jibaros...have no notion of a Supreme Being and a Creator of the world...the Jibaros believe in two higher deities, the Earth-mother Nungüi and her husband Shakaëma, revered as the mother and father of the whole Jibaro culture; but these deities have little in common with the Supreme Beings which are reported to exist among several other [indigenous populations] in different parts of the world" (Karsten, 1935:371-372).

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

Notes: "The Indians have two words for denoting a spirit or demon: wakáni and iguánchi. The word wakáni may be translated into 'soul' or 'shadow'. Human souls disembodied temporarily, for instance in dreams, or permanently in death, are called wakáni, as is also the shadow reflected in water or on the ground, or in a mirror...The word wakáni however is also used in a more comprehensive sense, to signify a supernatural being in general. There are wakáni or souls not only in men, but also in animals, in plants, in heavenly bodies, and in other objects of nature. The whole air swarms with these spiritual beings appearing in different shapes, especially as animals, but as a rule they can be seen only by those intoxicated by natéma or other intoxicating drinks. There appears to be no essential difference between the human souls and souls inhabiting animals, plants, and inanimate objects; the latter too seem to be conceived simply as disembodied human souls. Or more strictly speaking, the Jibaros know only one chief kind of spirit or soul which inhabit men, animals, and inanimate objects of nature, or lead an entirely independent existence as evil demons, and which may occasionally exchange one form of existence for another" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

↳ Human spirits can be seen:

– I don't know

↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "It is thought that the spirits of the deceased (wakáni) like to visit their surviving relatives even after they have moved to another house, and in case their cult has been neglected they may punish them by sending disease, by killing the swine or the hens or the dogs, or by robbing small children" (Karsten, 1935:463-464).

↳ Human spirits can reward:

– Yes

Notes: "Although the dead are as a rule resentful, they may on the other hand reward such relatives as know their duties towards them by bestowing all sorts of material blessings upon them" (Karsten, 1935:464-465).

↳ Human spirits can punish:

– Yes

Notes: "It is thought that the spirits of the deceased (wakáni) like to visit their surviving relatives even after they have moved to another house, and in case their cult has been neglected they may punish them by sending disease, by killing the swine or the hens or the dogs, or by robbing small children" (Karsten, 1935:463-464).

↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: "The revengeful ghost [enemy killed in battle], who takes no rest, follows his slayer everywhere, always looking for an opportunity to kill or harm him, and the latter believes that he meets him especially in dreams. Generally the wakáni meets him in the shape of an Indian armed with a lance, with which he is continually trying to kill him. But the spirit also appears to him in other shapes..." (Karsten, 1935:307-309).

↳ Human spirits possess hunger:

– Yes

Notes: See Karsten, 1935:463-464.

↳ Human spirits communicate with the living:

– Yes

Notes: "The soul of the murdered Indian requires that his relatives shall avenge his death. The errant spirit, which gets no rest, visits his sons, his brothers, his father, in dreams, and weeping conjures them not to let the slayer escape but to wreak vengeance upon him for the life he has taken" (Karsten, 1935:271-272).

↳ In dreams:

– Yes

Notes: "The soul of the murdered Indian requires that his relatives shall avenge his death. The errant spirit, which gets no rest, visits his sons, his brothers, his father, in dreams, and weeping conjures them not to let the slayer escape but to wreak vengeance upon him for the life he has taken" (Karsten, 1935:271-272).

↳ Only through monarch:

– No

Notes: A monarch is not present among the Jivaro.

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: "The Jibaros...have no notion of a Supreme Being and a Creator of the world...the Jibaros believe in two higher deities, the Earth-mother Nungüi and her husband Shakaëma, revered as the mother and father of the whole Jibaro culture; but these deities have little in common with the Supreme Beings which are reported to exist among several other [indigenous populations] in different parts of the world" (Karsten, 1935:371-372).

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

– I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– I don't know

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "Nungüi noa, the mythical Jibaro woman, created all fruits in the beginning and still reigns over them. In the different plant spirits—those which, like the manioc, the beans and the earth-nuts, are of the female sex—there is something of her own spirit; she alone, therefore, is able to give an abundant crop to the women cultivating them. On the other hand, for such garden plants as are supposed to be of the male sex—as for instance the banana and the maize—the Jibaro men who have to cultivate these plants appeal to the mythical husband of Nungüi, Shakaëma, who presides over them and influences their growth and fertility" (Karsten, 1925:378-381).

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

– I don't know

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: "Although all wakáni—especially the wakáni of dead persons—awaken uncanny feelings in the Indians and are therefore always more or less feared, yet some of them are believed to be more evil-disposed to mankind than the rest. The most evil and most powerful of the spirits are called iguánchi. All iguánchi are wakáni, but all wakáni are not necessarily iguánchi. The souls of persons who have been particularly feared in life, especially the souls of medicine-men and sorcerers, are believed to be changed into iguánchi after death. The souls of enemies killed in war also figure among this dangerous class of demons. The iguánchi however appear in many different shapes" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: "Sometimes they appear in shadowy human-like forms, or as living Indians wearing beautiful feather ornaments and painted red in the face. Mostly, however the demons assume the shape of different animal beings, of quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, and even insects" (Karsten, 1935:372-373).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings can be physically felt:

– I don't know

↳ These mixed human-divine beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– I don't know

↳ These mixed human-divine beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "Earthquakes (urkai) are caused by powerful iguánchi in the earth, who are shaking their bodies" (Karsten, 1935:381-382).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings exhibit positive emotion:

– I don't know

↳ These mixed human-divine beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Yes

Notes: "There is no clear line of demarcation between good and evil spirits. Most of the iguanchi are certainly conceived of as evil or malignant, but a man who knows how to deal with them and to influence them in the right way—in the first place, of course, the medicine-man—may not only be able to resist and vanquish them, but even to make them his 'friends' and allies" (Karsten, 1935:430-431).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings possess hunger:

– Yes

Notes: See Karsten, 1935:463-464.

↳ Mixed human-divine beings communicate with the living:

– Yes

Notes: "The iguánchi even attacks sick persons while they lie in their beds at home. The demon then appears to the patient especially in a dream, speaking to him and singing a song in seductive strains in order to entice his soul to follow him to his mysterious habitation in the wood" (Karsten, 1935:383-385).

↳ In waking, everyday life:

– I don't know

↳ In dreams:

– Yes

Notes: "The iguánchi even attacks sick persons while they lie in their beds at home. The demon then appears to the patient especially in a dream, speaking to him and singing a song in seductive strains in order to entice his soul to follow him to his mysterious habitation in the wood" (Karsten, 1935:383-385).

↳ Only through monarch:

– No

Notes: Monarchs are not present among the Jivaro.

↳ Other form of communication with living:

– Yes [specify]: Drums

Notes: "The tunduí [signal drum] of the Jibaro Indians is not merely a signalling instrument in the ordinary sense of the word, but its greatest significance is religious: it is a means of communicating with the spiritual world...the drum among other things is closely associated with the spirit (iguánchi) which appears in the shape of the great water boa or anaconda, and that the drum itself is supposed to be a representation of the great serpent" (Karsten, 1935:110-111).

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: "... the Jibaros believe in two higher deities, the Earth-mother Nungüi and her husband Shakaëma, revered as the mother and father of the whole Jibaro culture...But besides these, the religious ideas and practices of the Jibaros have reference to supernatural beings of a lower order, to souls, spirits and demons of which there are many different classes" (Karsten, 1935:371-373).

↳ Organized by kinship based on a family model:

– No

Notes: There does not appear to be any clear organization of Jivaro supernatural beings.

↳ Organized hierarchically:

– No

Notes: There does not appear to be any clear organization of Jivaro supernatural beings.

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– I don't know

Notes: Insufficient ethnographic details.

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: The spirits of the dead (wakáni) are described as capable of supernatural punishment. Limited details are available. "It is thought that the spirits of the deceased (wakáni) like to visit their surviving relatives even after they have moved to another house, and in case their cult has been neglected they may punish them by sending disease, by killing the swine or the hens or the dogs, or by robbing small children" (Karsten, 1935:463-464).

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

Notes: No high god is present among the Jivaro.

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: The spirits of the dead (wakáni) are described as capable of supernatural punishment.

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– No

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: The spirits of the dead (wakáni) are described as meting out supernatural punishment when neglected by living relatives.

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

Notes: "It is thought that the spirits of the deceased (wakáni) like to visit their surviving relatives even after they have moved to another house, and in case their cult has been neglected they may punish them by sending disease, by killing the swine or the hens or the dogs, or by robbing small children" (Karsten, 1935:463-464).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– I don't know

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of sickness or illness:

– Yes

Notes: "It is thought that the spirits of the deceased (wakáni) like to visit their surviving relatives even after they have moved to another house, and in case their cult has been neglected they may punish them by sending disease, by killing the swine or the hens or the dogs, or by robbing small children" (Karsten, 1935:463-464).

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– I don't know

Notes: One example of supernatural reward is present in ethnographic materials, but this example is not elaborated on. "Although the dead are as a rule resentful, they may on the other hand reward such relatives as know their duties towards them by bestowing all sorts of material blessings upon them" (Karsten, 1935:464-465).

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of messianic beliefs.

Is an eschatology present:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence indicating the presence of an eschatology.

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required celibacy.

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required castration.

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Yes

Notes: "A peculiarity of the Jibaros, which is of great psychological interest, is the idea that when a person makes an object which is considered of special importance he must fast or restrict his diet in some way lest the work turn out badly...The [Jivaro] are of opinion that their own physical condition at the time when the object is being made will in some mysterious way be reflected in and exert influence upon the quality of that object which will turn out good or bad accordingly" (Karsten, 1935:108).

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Yes

Notes: "As a general rule it may be stated that the Indians shun all animal beings as food the flesh of which is directly harmful or of which they have superstitious ideas of some kind. For this reason for instance venomous reptiles and other kinds of snakes, beasts and birds of prey, vultures, and most nocturnal birds are regarded as unfit for food" (Karsten, 1935:116-119).

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

– Yes

Notes: "The five great feasts of the Jibaros, as has appeared from my previous statements, are the 'feast of the children' (Uchiáuka), the 'feast of the young men (Kusúpani), the 'feast of the women' (Noa tsangu), the 'victory-feast' (Einsupani), and the 'feast of the dogs' (Yawápani)" (Karsten, 1935:429-430).



Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

– Yes

Notes: "With a similar mysterious power the...whuéa and the...oháha are endowed. As a [whuéa] or conductor of the ceremonies at the feast, as stated before, only an old warrior can officiate who himself has killed at least one enemy and celebrated a victory-feast. His insight, experience, valour, and other prominent military qualities acquired during a long life, and especially the magical power he has acquired by slaying his enemies, seems to be conceived almost as a physical reality, and his powers can, like that of the victor, in a certain degree be transferred to other people. It is for this reason that he always holds the hand of the victor at the most important ceremonies, the idea being that the action in question will thus have more emphasis and importance. The same holds good of the [oháha], through whose cooperation all actions performed by the women, and particularly by the wife and daughter of the victor, secure the tone and stress necessary" (Karsten, 1935:365-368).



Is there use of intoxicants:

– Yes

Notes: "...we have seen what an important part tobacco water plays for instance at the 'feast of the women', when it is supposed to communicate to the married women a wonderful power and ability for their various domestic occupations. The two narcotics known under the names of natéma and maikoa have also frequently been mentioned in connection with Indian divination..." (Karsten, 1935:432-436).

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– A tribe

Notes: The Jivaro have no political authority beyond the local community, which is reflective of autonomous bands and villages (Ethnographic Atlas column 33, Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004). Additionally, the Jivaro have agamous communities (without localized clans or any marked tendency toward either local exogamy or local endogamy), and lack either patrilineal or matrilineal kin groups. Source of information: Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1967), Columns 19, 20, 22. "From the statements I have previously made as to the distribution of the Jibaro tribes it appears that their social organization is loose. In fact, the whole people is split up into a great number of tribes which in their turn are sub-divided into smaller clans or septs comprising a few families closely related to one another by blood. These sub-tribes do not form village communities; each family inhabits its own big communal house (héra), but these are not situated close to one another, they lie scattered here and there in the virgin forest. Generally one has to march for one or several hours to arrive at the next house. Each Jibaro house forms in fact a separate and independent social, political, and economic unit with its own household, its own plantations in the vicinity of the house, and its own ruler or chief, the oldest family father who, at any rate in time of peace, is not controlled by anybody" (Karsten, 1935:183-184). "Each Jivaria or community is autonomous, although alliances between several Jivarias in a district may take place, but mostly for the purposes of warfare. There is a tendency for several communities to be related to each other by blood and affinal kinship ties because of the rule of local exogamy, which requires that a man marry a woman from a village other than his own. There is, therefore, a more or less natural grouping of contiguous communities into a loose tribe, but cooperation among them is almost entirely limited to collaboration in feuds or in head-hunting against more distant and unrelated communities" (Beierle, 2006).

Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– No

Notes: See question on levels of social complexity, above. Additionally, "Since there exists no society in the strict sense of the word apart from the family, it is natural that social classes, distinctions between rich and poor, etc, are also non-existent, like the distinction between rulers and ruled. If we may speak of a 'government', it is a purely patriarchal one, the head of the family and the owner of the house being at the same time the 'chief' of this small community, theoretically even with absolute power" (Karsten, 1935:251).

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, indicates that no food storage is present among the Jivaro (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicate that unimproved trails are used among the Jivaro (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). It can be assumed that transportation infrastructure is not present.

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 14, Routes of Land Transport, indicate that unimproved trails are used among the Jivaro (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). It can be assumed that transportation infrastructure is not present.

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Notes: According to Tuden and Marshall (1972; column 10: Police), "police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to private retaliation, or to sorcery".

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– No

Notes: According to Tuden and Marshall (1972; Column 9: Judiciary), "supreme judicial authority is lacking at any level above that of the local community".

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes

Notes: The Jivaro rely predominantly on extensive/shifting agriculture for subsistence. Hunting supplements the diet. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.

↳ Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

– Hunting (including marine animals)

– Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

Notes: The Jivaro rely predominantly on extensive/shifting agriculture for subsistence. Hunting supplements the diet. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.