

**FROM MUSIC ARCHAEOLOGY
TO HISTORIOGRAPHY:
ANDEAN MUSIC ARCHAEOLOGY
AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, SINGING
AND DANCING IN GUAMAN POMA'S
*NUÉVA CRÓNICA Y BIEN GOBIERNO***

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Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala was an Indigenous chronicler who wrote the book Nuéva Crónica y Bien Gobierno (1615/1616) during the first period of the Conquista. It is about the life of the indigenous people and their relationship to the Spanish conquerers. The book has a lot of drawings which are unique. In many of them, musical instruments in the hands of musicians, and dancing are depicted. These depictions of instruments can be compared to archaeologically excavated instruments of earlier times, many of which completely disappeared during the Conquista. Guaman Poma must have known some of these instrument-types. When such historiographical points of view are considered, important questions of methodology in music archaeology are raised.

In the Andean region and specifically in its western lowlands, the Sierra, numerous cultures flourished before the Inca established their kingdom, the Tahuantinsuyu, and later the Europeans conquered that part of South America. Little is known about these illiterate cultures. However, relatively rich archaeological treasures, including many musical instruments, bear witness to their former

existence. Guaman Poma, our author, lived at the beginning of the period during which Europeans taught the Indians to read and write using Latin script. Guaman Poma drew musical instruments and he wrote about music, making his work of great historiographical interest. Before I introduce him and his book to you, I want to give you an overview of the instruments known from archaeological excavations which were used by the people of the early cultures preceding the Inca. The diversity of instrumental types is remarkable. They are dated ca. 500 BC–500 AD; a more precise and detailed dating is generally not yet possible. Some of the instruments are from later cultures (e.g. bells). Today, pre-Columbian music instruments are kept in museums of Latin America, North America and Europe. We know nothing of singing; as for dance, rare representations are known from icononography on vessels.

I will proceed according to the classification of Hornbostel and Sachs of 1914, who put all the known instruments of the world into a certain order which demonstrates relationships between sound-producing devices. When Hornbostel and Sachs wrote their article, very little was known about the instruments of the ancient Americas. However, newly discovered instruments from archaeological excavations fit perfectly well into this classification system. These instruments are made mostly of clay, sometimes metal, hard wood or cane, seeds, stones, bone, snails and shells. The instruments were discovered in the Montana (the mountains), the Sierra (the lowlands). Nothing is known from the Yungas (rain forest).

Let's look at the pictures now.¹ We see bells and jingles, mostly from the north, Colombia (Fig. 1). Next are rattles (Fig. 2), all of which are from different periods and cultures of South America. In the third illustration we have frame drums of different sizes and from different cultures (Fig. 3), double, threefold and quadruple clay whistles, all of which are made with a lot of creative fantasy (Fig. 4), vessel flutes (Fig. 5), long flutes (Fig. 6), panflutes of different sizes and shapes (Fig. 7, Fig. 8). Note that the Ecuadorian panflutes are quite different from the Peruvian ones.

¹ All the pictures of archaeological objects are from Hickmann 1990.

The pipes on Ecuadorian panflutes are irregular in length; they do not follow each other in a row from long to short. Panflutes are not preserved in Ecuador, so we cannot measure their pipes. Lastly, we know of horns and trumpets (Fig. 9, Fig. 10). Now let's look at the multifunctional objects—whistling bottles (Fig. 11) and human figures (Fig. 12). We do not know their semantics, or their functions. Perhaps the whistling bottles served as containers for water or other fluids, whilst the human figures were puppets;² or perhaps both objects were used for cultic purposes. Both objects have whistling devices attached or inside, so they have been interpreted as musical instruments. This is a typical problem of music archaeology—how can we understand all these objects from mostly oral cultures when written evidence is missing? We can study objects in terms of their material and their shape. Sometimes we can date them with archaeological methods. We can describe them, and, if playable, we can make acoustic studies, recording them and investigating their sonic characteristics. Sometimes there is an archaeological find context, when the objects have been found in tombs, settlements or the like. Music archaeology takes us so far, but we cannot learn more. Who made the instruments, for whom and how were they manufactured—and for which purpose? Who played them? These are the limits of music archaeology, which apply equally to general archaeology. Furthermore, when the instruments were excavated, the archaeologists often did not record anything about context—the circumstances, places and other objects they were found with.

Let us turn to Guaman's book now. First of all, I want to give you a short introduction to the author and his work. Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala is his full name; we know very little about him. He was a nobleman, and a descendant from an Inca family. He was born in the northern Andes in 1535 or 1550. He had several jobs during his life in Peru, working in the Spanish royal administration. He was condemned by the local governor at the end of the sixteenth century for unknown reasons, and he decided to travel around the Tahuantinsuyo, the Inca country of the Andes.

² For the tradition of "puppets" in ancient America see E. Hickmann 2008, 147 ff.

In that period he wrote his book, *First New Chronicle and Good Government*, which is concerned with the period directly following the Spanish conquest of 1532 onwards. The book itself dates to ca. 1600–1616. It consists of about eight hundred pages, handwritten in Spanish. Guaman Poma must have learnt Spanish as a child, when everybody had to learn reading and writing in schools. Guaman Poma's native language was Quetchua, and the book has countless expressions and also whole sentences in that language. The most important fact for us is that this book contains four hundred drawings showing the life of the Indians at the early period of the Conquista. It is the only South American work of a chronicler with such drawings; therefore it is extremely important.³

Guaman Poma mentions and draws instruments being played, dance and singing several times, mostly in his extended first part when he writes about the life of the Indians at the time of the early Conquista. The actual music is unknown, as musical notation was not used. Instruments were used in festivals of the Tahuantinsuyu inhabitants. Guaman Poma says that he writes only about the Indians of the Montana (the mountains), not of the Sierra (the lowlands) and the Yungas (rainforest). That may be the reason that he omits many instrumental types, most of which are preserved in the western Sierra of the Andes. Obviously, Guaman Poma documents instruments from the period right after the Conquista. Many Indian sound-producing devices must have disappeared, for unknown reasons. They do not appear in Guaman's book. I will show and comment on all items he has drawn in the hands of musicians. Were all the other types destroyed by the Europeans, or were they hidden by the Indians? We do not know whether the Inca still had them. The only known Inca instruments are whistling bottles, human figures with pebbles inside to make them sound, and rattles. No chronicler mentions them.

³ I am quoting from the edition of John Murra, Rolena Adorno and Jörg Urioste of 1987. All the illustrations with musicians are taken from this edition. This book is divided into three volumes. Sometimes I consulted the abridged version in English by David Frye of 2006.

Guaman Poma does not include many different instrumental types. The most frequently mentioned and drawn sound-producing item in Guaman's book is the frame drum. It appears exclusively in the hands of women. Its name in Guaman's text is *tanbor*; with the skin of a puma it is called *puma tinya*, and when it is made from human skin it is called *runa tinya*. When people were killed as a punishment their skin was used to manufacture a drum, and their bones were made into flutes. Drums were played at various occasions. In Fig. 13 we see drums at a royal marriage; the bride and another woman beat them with sticks. Inga Roca (a then historical Incan ruler) is shown at a certain distance. Drums are also played at a big festival of Inga Roca; many participants dance and sing, but only the drum is drawn, perhaps as a symbol for music. Many drummers accompany the festival of the sun. The drum is also beaten for the holy virgin at Easter festivals, together, with snails, conch shells, different flutes such as *pingollos* (long block and duct flutes, nowadays called *pinkilla*), *antara* (panflutes), *pipo* (whistles) and other instruments which are referred to using Quetchua terminology. Singing and dancing accompanied big royal festivals, such as a masked dance with drumming and singing. The conch shell is the horn of a natural snail, called *mullu*, or *quepa* or "trumpet." It is used mostly for signals of all kinds. In our next drawing we see it announcing a procession of penitence which took place regularly in January. According to the text, drums, flutes, trumpets and little bells are played during the procession, but only the conch shell is drawn (Fig. 14). The purpose of this procession was to banish diseases and "Pestilencia." Musical instruments, called *musicas* were present at funerals, as Guaman says. Flutes, together with a big drum, are combined with singing and dancing at a local festival (Fig. 15) of which they had many. Although flutes or "pipes" were the only melodic instruments until the arrival of the Spaniards, they appear rarely. Let's look at a drawing of a dance at another local festival (Fig. 16). Here a panflute, an *antara*, is played by a dancer. This is the only time the *antara* is drawn by Guaman. Guaman says that the flute is called *pipo*, although it is normally called *antara*. The *antara* was the most well-known instrument in Peru, but in much earlier epochs and cultures, such as the Nasca. This instrument seems to have been forgotten by the time of Guaman Poma. About 1000 years had past, and the traditions concerning panpipes may not have been alive. There seems to be a

sort of chronology in the book. The further the author proceeds with his writing, he stops mentioning Indian instruments. Instead, music-making Indians are shown engaging in Christian activities. Indians, all of which were baptised, appear as musicians in the long chapter about the church and church life. Here, the choir boys are dressed in the Spanish way, singing from a choir book, with European recorders in their hands and pressed against their lips (Fig. 17). More often they are ringing hand bells or church bells.

In Fig. 18 you see women drumming and two Indians, who seem to be dancing, in masks or special costumes blowing a vessel pipe. The text of the song is as follows: "If no venison passes by, if no deer shows up, you dance with the *wayku* under your nose. Ay little brother." So the whistles are intended to attract specific animals. The instruments are made of the heads of such animals, or they are made of clay, with attached antlers. Thus, the protagonists catch the deer by using their own voice. I have seen such instruments in Canada in a private collection; they sound hollow and have a warble tone, although no fingerholes. The song proceeds as follows: *hauca, hano, huauco, chico, chico, chico, chico, yahahahaha...* and so on. We learn that the instrument's name is *wayku*. In another picture we see the underworld; a big beast eats all the sinners, and out of his noseholes two horns are to be seen, obviously to underline the rough tone; the text says nothing about the instruments. In another picture a musical instrument seems to be a symbol for pleasure. We see two Criollos, a term used for the second generation of Indians with a Spanish father. Guaman Poma says here that the Criollos were lazy and did not want to work like in former times. They preferred to make music and to dance (Fig. 19). The man plays a guitar; Guaman Poma writes of *taner*, by which is meant the playing of an instrument and ringing church bells. But he does not mention a stringed instrument. In the English translation it is called a "mandolin" but that is, of course, a mistake.

We have learnt about the names of many musical instruments, sometimes in Quechua, about their function, i.e. whether they were played in festivals or other occasions, and about the occasions themselves. We have learnt who plays the instruments, so we can address gender issues, which archaeology by itself is not able to achieve. With the aid of music-archaeological methods we can study instruments, and examine archaeological contexts.

Historiography can be the ideal complement to music archaeology or vice versa. As an example, the rich written evidence given by Guaman Poma de Ayala cannot be overestimated.

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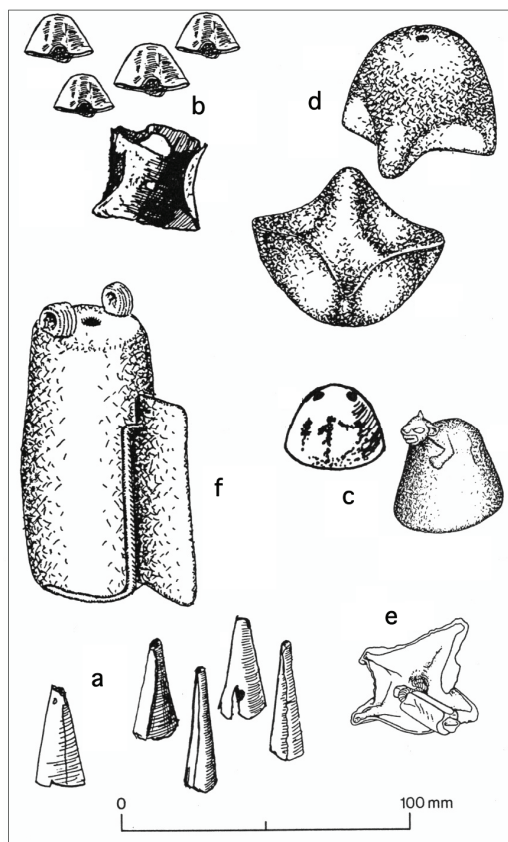


Fig. 1. Bells of tumbaga and silver

- a, b Peru, Chimu culture;
- c Peru, Nasca;
- d Colombia, Tairona;
- e Pachacamac, culture unknown;
- f Colombia, Tairona.

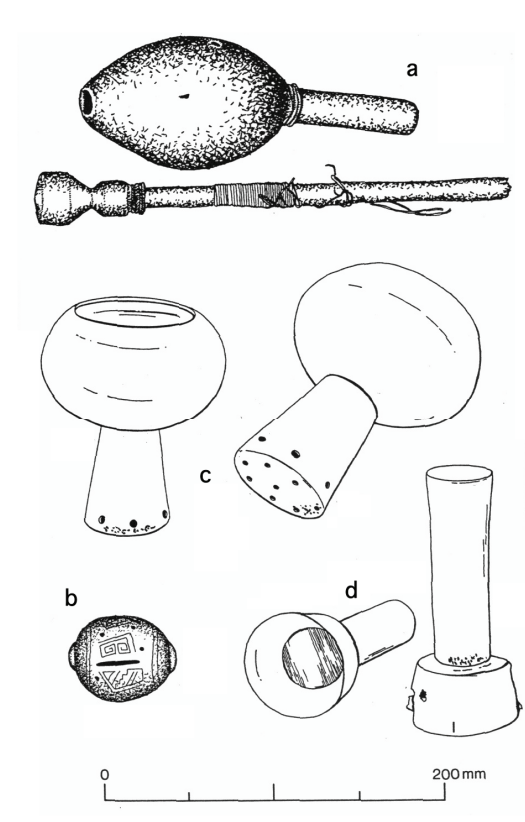


Fig. 2. Rattles

a Lima, culture unknown (wood);

b Ecuador, Guangala;

c Vessel with pebbles in its foot, Peru, Moche;

d Rattles of metal, Peru, Moche.

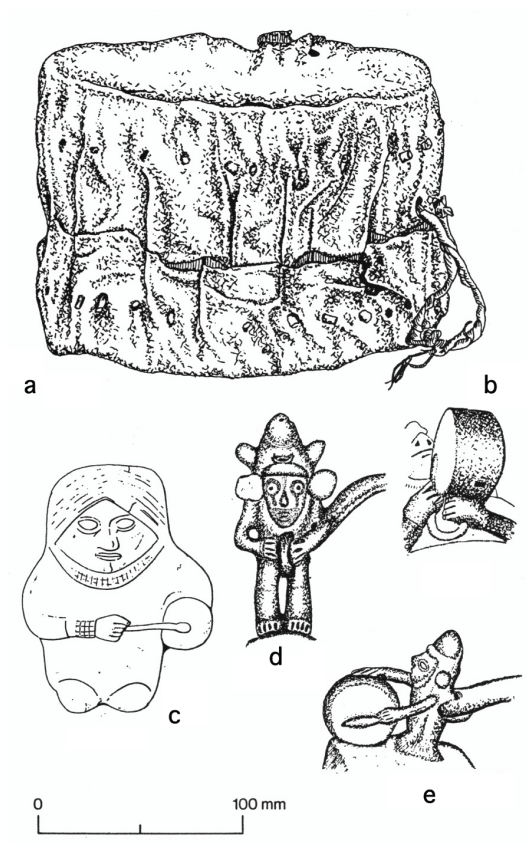


Fig. 3. Frame drums

- a "huacho", culture unknown;
- b, c Peru, Moche;
- d Peru, Chimú;
- e Peru, Chankay.

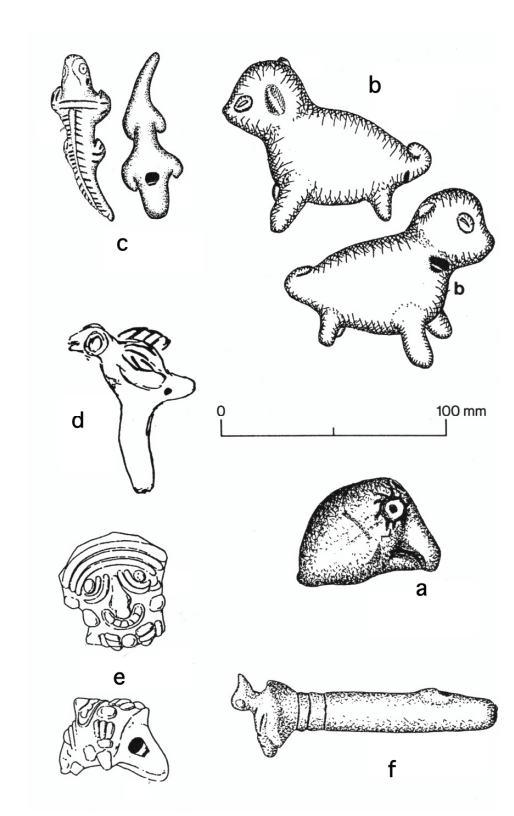


Fig. 4. Whistles

- a “Pachacamac”, culture unknown;
- b, c Ecuador, Jama-Coaque and Bahia/Guangala;
- d “Lima”, culture unknown;
- e Ecuador, La Tolita;
- f Ecuador, Jama-Coaque.

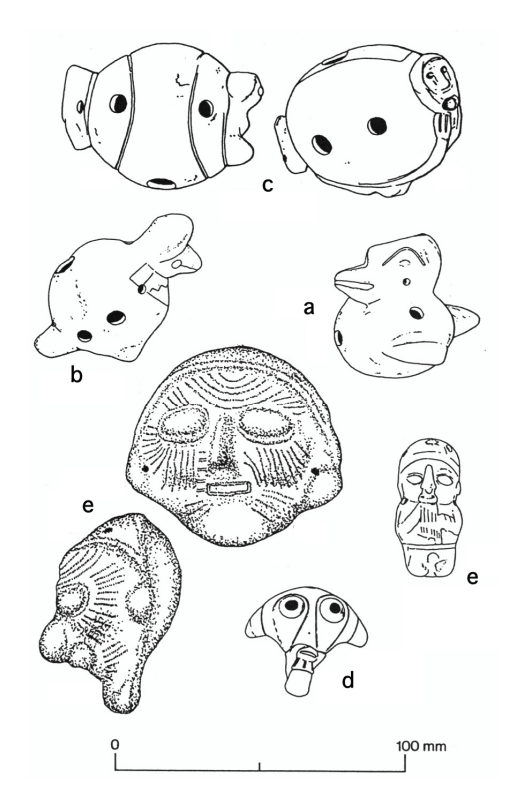


Fig. 5. Vessel flutes from Ecuador

a Chorrera;
 b Tejar-Daule;
 c Tachina; Guangala;
 d, e Bahia.

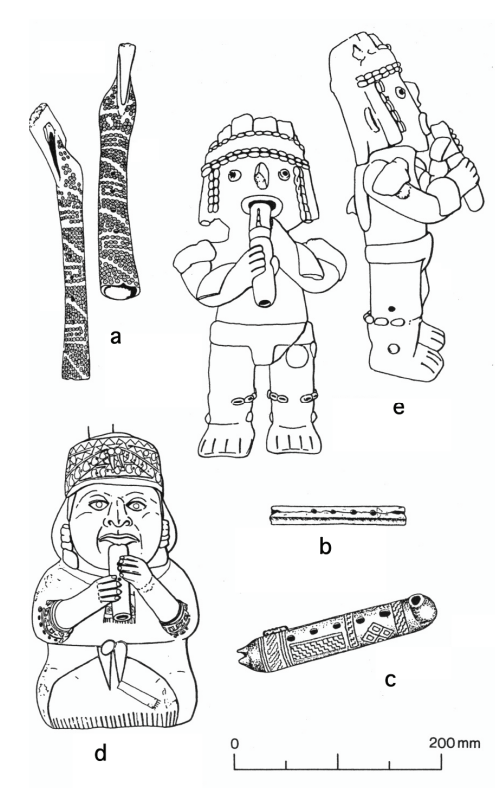


Fig. 6. Long Flutes

- a Peru, Nazca;
- b “Pachacamac”, culture unknown;
- c Peru, Ica;
- d Peru, Moche;
- e Peru, Ecuador, Bahía.

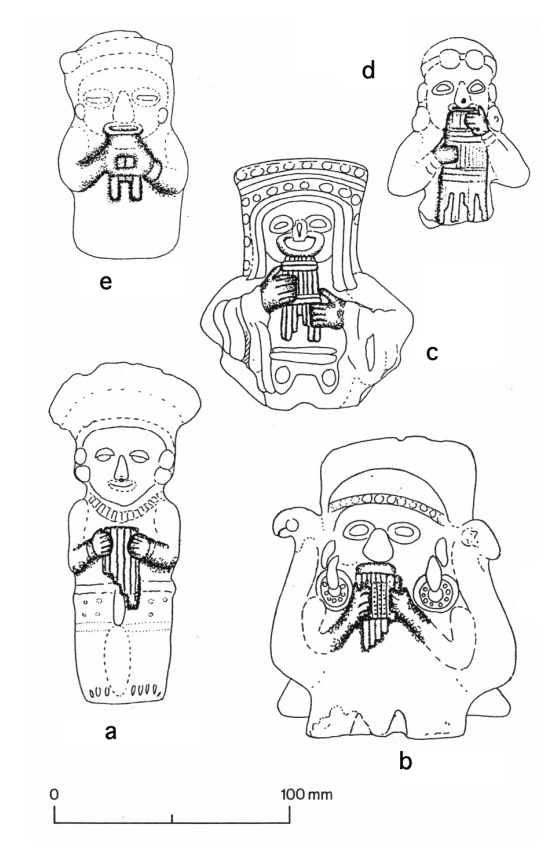


Fig. 7. Ecuadorean Musicians with Panflutes;
clay figurines

a, e Bahia;
b Guangala;
c, d Tumaco.

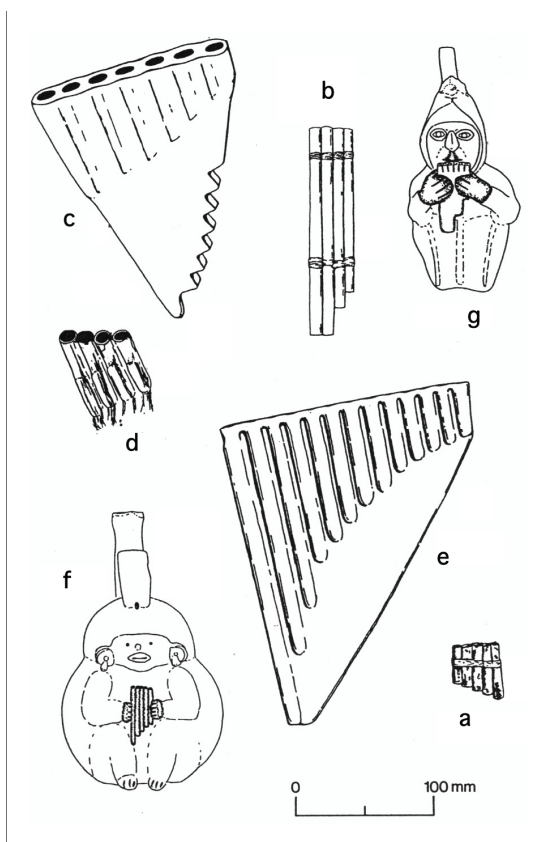


Fig. 8. Panflutes

- a Peru, Chimú;
- b Colombia, Quimbaya;
- c, d, e Peru, Nazca;
- f Ecuador, Chorrera;
- g Peru, Moche.

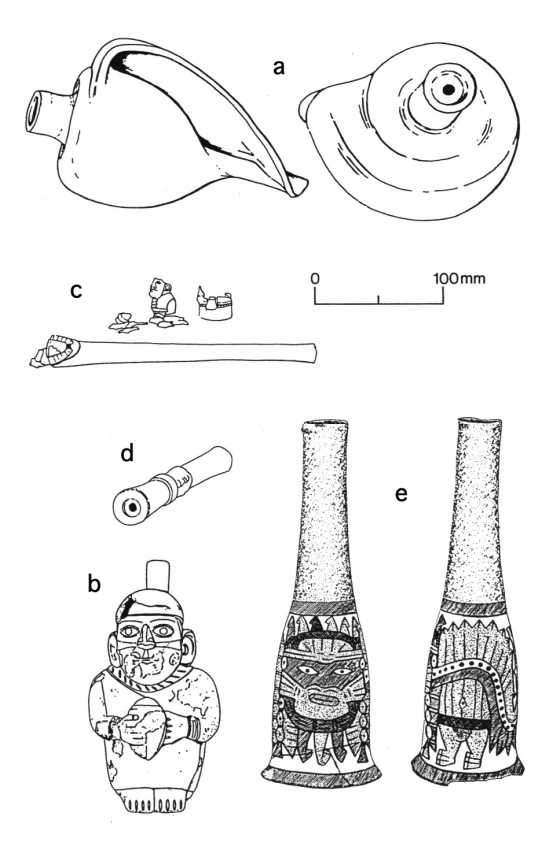


Fig. 9. Horns and Trumpets

a, b, c Peru, Moche;
 d Peru, Chimu (of wood);
 e Peru, Nazca.

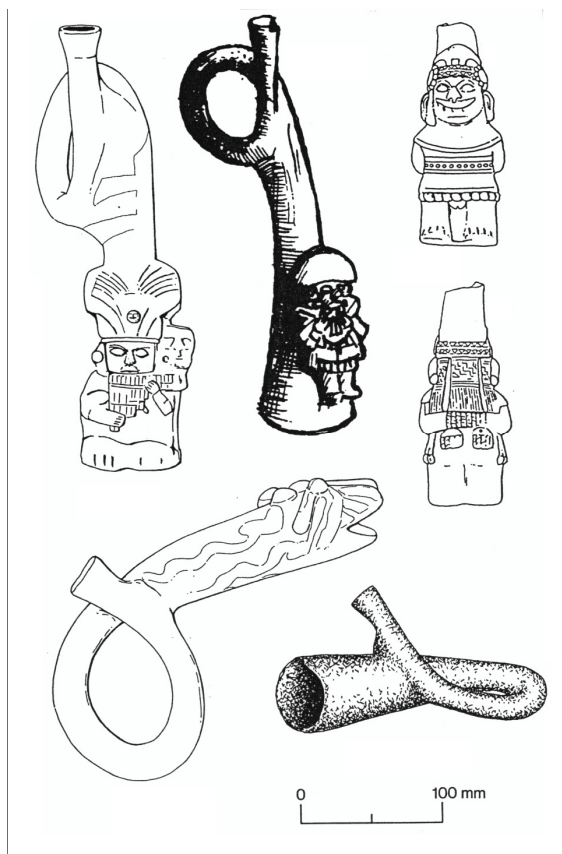


Fig. 10. Trumpets from Moche.

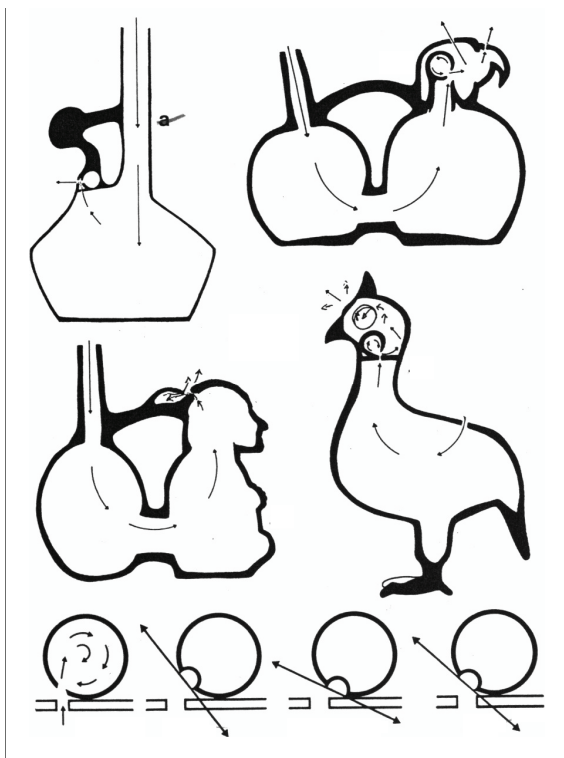


Fig. 11. Whistling bottles

The sound originates by pouring water into the neck of the single or double vessel, the air escapes by going through the whistling attachment producing a sound.

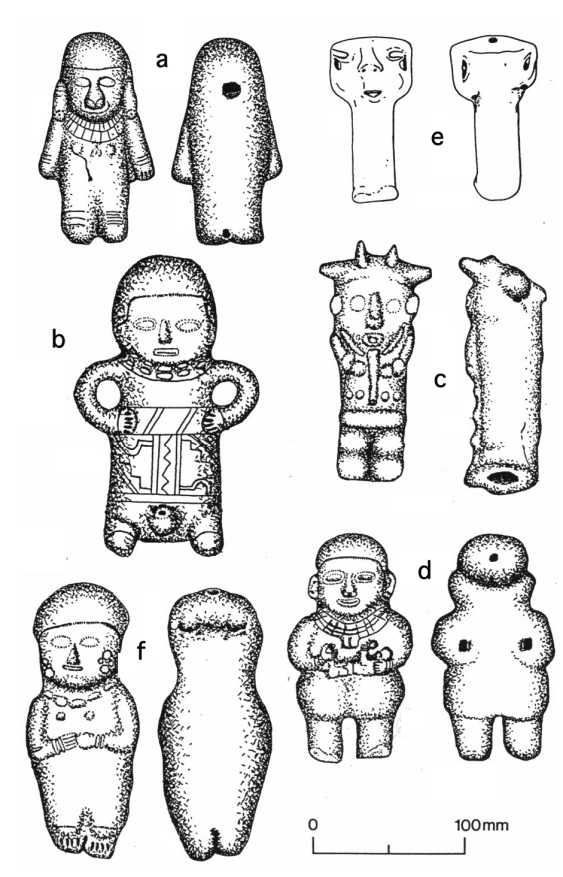


Fig. 12. Human figurines from Ecuadorian cultures.

They have a whistling attachmant on their back,
on the sides of their head (e) or between their legs (b)

- a Jama-Coaque;
- b Guangala;
- c, f Bahia;
- d La Tolita;
- e Tumaco.



Fig. 13. Women beating their drums at a royal wedding.

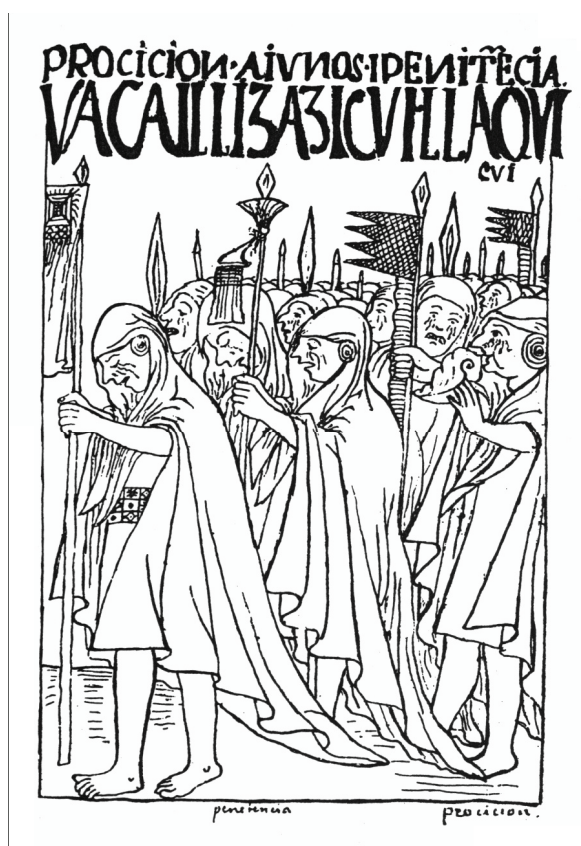


Fig. 14. Many instruments are played here as the text explains, but only the conch shell is drawn in the hands of a man.
All are in tears because of “pestilencia”.

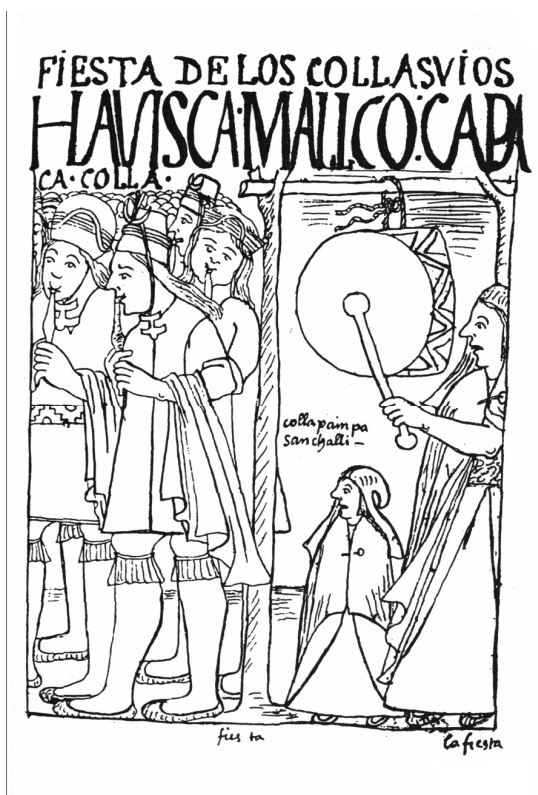


Fig. 15. Drum beating and flute playing
at a local festival.



Fig. 16. *antara* player accompanying a local dance.

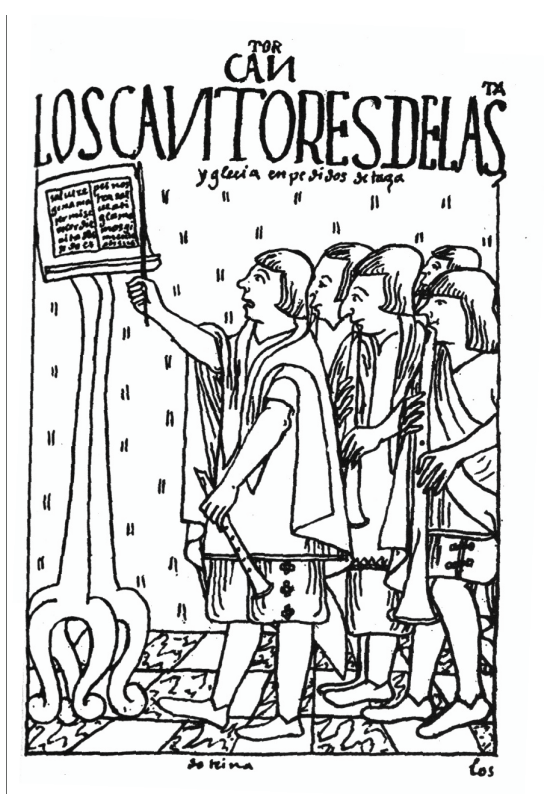


Fig. 17. Choir boys singing
from a Christian choir book,
holding and playing European recorders.

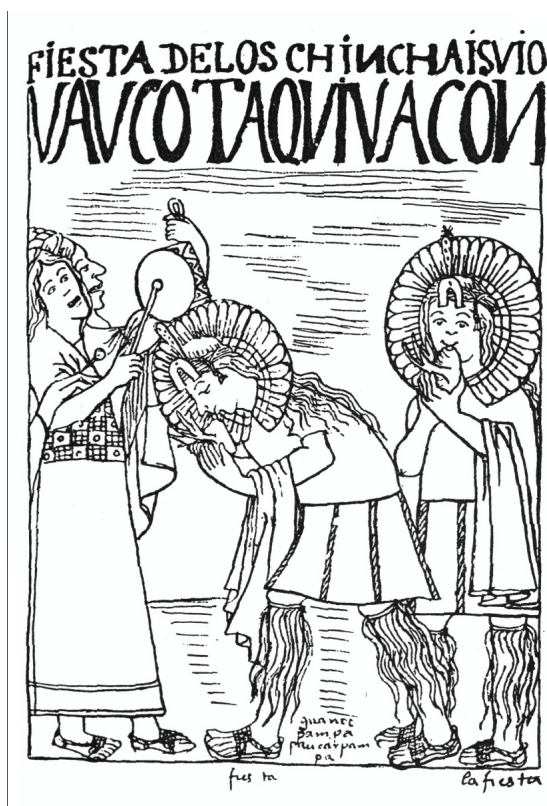


Fig. 18. Women beating the drum and men in costumes blowing antler whistles to attract venisson.



Fig. 19. Criollos dancing and playing the Spanish guitar.