

In the song of mountainer (Yamauta) (Side 2, N. 5) from Tsugaru District in Aomori Prefecture. The text says: a boy goes to the mountain to work when he reaches the age of fifteen; he goes up in the mountain and plays on the flute, a melody which blends with the sound of the wind blowing through the pine trees. This song used to be sung by mountainers walking in the mountains, or when they spend long days alone on the mountain for their work and it brought them comfort. Later it came to be sung in Sake (wine) parties at home, and as a result, the style of the song and the singing technique became gradually more sophisticated as it appears on this recording registered here. An accompaniment on the Shakuhachi has been added to the song. The main characteristics of this song lie in its peculiar rhythm, a free rhythm which can be met with in other areas of Asia, for instance, in the folk songs of Mongolia.

The Bon dances (Side 2, N. 6) which spread throughout Japan are also called Urabon. These terms seem to be derived from Sanscrit terms used in ancient India, Ullanbana and Avarambana. These refer to a kind of religious festival to welcome the spirit of the dead. In Japan this type of festivals is held as a rule around the 15th of June according to the lunar calendar. The style of the festival varies greatly, but it usually is the occasion of group dances, called Bon-odori or Bon dance. Bon-odori has become gradually enriched with elements of entertainment. The present record shows a typical example of a Bon dance meant for entertainment on a large scale. In Tokushima City on Shikoku Island, takes place for a few days every summer an important festival of Bon dance. Groups of dancers from various sectors of the city go through the main streets dancing Awa-odori, accompanied with Hayashi and singing. The text of the songs always refers to the lord of the country, formerly named Awa, who was the founder of the dance festival. In 1585, when the castle of the lord was completed, the workers danced in joy in his honour. Today this festival has become quite famous and hundreds of thousands of